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THE GOLDEN BOUGH

VOLUME TWO

THE GOLDEN BOUGH

A Study in Magic and Religion

BY

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CHAPTER XLIV

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE

DIONYSUS was not the only Greek deity whose tragic story and ritual appear to reflect the decay and revival of vegetation. In another form and with a different application the old tale reappears in the myth of Demeter and Persephone. Substantially their myth is identical with the Syrian one of Aphrodite (Astarte) and Adonis, the Phrygian one of Cybele and Attis, and the Egyptian one of Isis and Osiris. In the Greek fable, as in its Asiatic and Egyptian counterparts, a goddess mourns the loss of a loved one, who personifies the vegetation, more especially the corn, which dies in winter to revive in spring; only whereas the Oriental imagination figured the loved and lost one as a dead lover or a dead husband lamented by his leman or his wife, Greek fancy embodied the same idea in the tenderer and purer form of a dead daughter bewailed by her sorrowing mother.

The oldest literary document which narrates the myth of Demeter and Persephone is the beautiful Homeric *Hymn to Demeter,* which critics assign to the seventh century before our era. The object of the poem is to explain the origin of the Eleusinian mysteries, and the complete silence of the poet as to Athens and the Athenians, who in after ages took conspicuous part in the festival, renders it probable that the hymn was composed in the far off time when Eleusis was still a petty independent state, and before the stately procession of the Mysteries had begun to defile, in bright September days, over the low chain of barren rocky hills which divides the flat Eleusinian cornland from the more spacious olive-clad expanse of the Athenian plain. Be that as it may, the hymn reveals to us the conception which the writer entertained of the character and functions of the two goddesses; their natural shapes stand out sharply enough under the thin veil of poetical imagery. The youthful Persephone, so runs the tale, was gathering roses and lilies, crocuses and violets, hyacinths and narcissuses in a lush meadow, when the earth gaped and Pluto, lord of the Dead, issuing from the abyss carried her off on his golden car to be his bride and queen in the gloomy subterranean world. Her sorrowing mother Demeter, with her yellow tresses veiled in a dark mourning mantle, sought her over land and sea, and learning from the Sun her daughter's fate she withdrew in high dudgeon from the gods and took up her abode at Eleusis, where she presented herself to the king's daughters in the guise of an old woman, sitting sadly under the shadow of an olive tree beside the Maiden's Well, to which the damsels had come to draw water in bronze pitchers for their father's house. In her wrath at her bereavement the goddess suffered not the seed to grow in the earth but kept it hidden under ground, and she vowed that never would she set foot on Olympus and never would she let the corn sprout till her lost daughter should be restored to her.

Vainly the oxen dragged the ploughs to and fro in the fields; vainly the sower dropped the barley seed in the brown furrows; nothing came up from the parched and crumbling soil. Even the Rarian plain near Eleusis, which was wont to wave with yellow harvests, lay bare and fallow. Mankind would have perished of hunger and the gods would have been robbed of the sacrifices which were their due, if Zeus in alarm had not commanded Pluto to disgorge his prey, to restore his bride Persephone to her mother Demeter. The grim lord of the Dead smiled and obeyed, but before he sent back his queen to the upper air on a golden car, he gave her the seed of a pomegranate to eat, which ensured that she would return to him. But Zeus stipulated that henceforth Persephone should spend two thirds of every year with her mother and the gods in the upper world and one third of the year with her husband in the nether world, from which she was to return year by year when the earth was gay with spring flowers. Gladly the daughter then returned to the sunshine, gladly her mother received her and fell upon her neck; and in her joy at recovering the lost one Demeter made the corn to sprout from the clods of the ploughed fields and all the broad earth to be heavy with leaves and blossoms. And straightway she went and showed this happy sight to the princes of Eleusis, to Triptolemus, Eumolpus, Diocles, and to the king Celeus himself, and moreover she revealed to them her sacred rites and mysteries. Blessed, says the poet, is the mortal man who has seen these things, but he who has had no share of them in life will never be happy in death when he has descended into the darkness of the grave. So the two goddesses departed to dwell in bliss with the gods on Olympus; and the bard ends the hymn with a pious prayer to Demeter and Persephone that they would be pleased to grant him a livelihood in return for his song.

It has been generally recognised, and indeed it seems scarcely open to doubt, that the main theme which the poet set before himself in composing this hymn was to describe the traditional foundation of the Eleusinian mysteries by the goddess Demeter. The whole poem leads up to the transformation scene in which the bare leafless expanse of the Eleusinian plain is suddenly turned, at the will of the goddess, into a vast sheet of ruddy corn; the beneficent deity takes the princes of Eleusis, shows them what she has done, teaches them her mystic rites, and vanishes with her daughter to heaven. The revelation of the mysteries is the triumphal close of the piece. This conclusion is confirmed by a more minute examination of the poem, which proves that the poet has given, not merely a general account of the foundation of the mysteries, but also in more or less veiled language mythical explanations of the origin of particular rites which we have good reason to believe formed essential features of the festival. Amongst the rites as to which the poet thus drops significant hints are the preliminary fast of the candidates for initiation, the torchlight procession, the all-night vigil, the sitting of the candidates, veiled and in silence, on stools covered with sheepskins, the use of scurrilous

language, the breaking of ribald jests, and the solemn communion with the divinity by participation in a draught of barley-water from a holy chalice.

But there is yet another and a deeper secret of the mysteries which the author of the poem appears to have divulged under cover of his narrative. He tells us how, as soon as she had transformed the barren brown expanse of the Eleusinian plain into a field of golden grain, she gladdened the eyes of Triptolemus and the other Eleusinian princes by showing them the growing or standing corn. When we compare this part of the story with the statement of a Christian writer of the second century, Hippolytus, that the very heart of the mysteries consisted in showing to the initiated a reaped ear of corn, we can hardly doubt that the poet of the hymn was well acquainted with this solemn rite, and that he deliberately intended to explain its origin in precisely the same way as he explained other rites of the mysteries, namely by representing Demeter as having set the example of performing the ceremony in her own person. Thus myth and ritual mutually explain and confirm each other. The poet of the seventh century before our era gives us the myth—he could not without sacrilege have revealed the ritual: the Christian father reveals the ritual, and his revelation accords perfectly with the veiled hint of the old poet. On the whole, then, we may, with many modern scholars, confidently accept the statement of the learned Christian father Clement of Alexandria, that the myth of Demeter and Persephone was acted as a sacred drama in the mysteries of Eleusis.

But if the myth was acted as a part, perhaps as the principal part, of the most famous and solemn religious rites of ancient Greece, we have still to enquire, What was, after all, stripped of later accretions, the original kernel of the myth which appears to later ages surrounded and transfigured by an aureole of awe and mystery, lit up by some of the most brilliant rays of Grecian literature and art? If we follow the indications given by our oldest literary authority on the subject, the author of the Homeric hymn to Demeter, the riddle is not hard to read; the figures of the two goddesses, the mother and the daughter, resolve themselves into personifications of the corn. At least this appears to be fairly certain for the daughter Persephone. The goddess who spends three or, according to another version of the myth, six months of every year with the dead under ground and the remainder of the year with the living above ground; in whose absence the barley seed is hidden in the earth and the fields lie bare and fallow; on whose return in spring to the upper world the corn shoots up from the clods and the earth is heavy with leaves and blossoms—this goddess can surely be nothing else than a mythical embodiment of the vegetation, and particularly of the corn, which is buried under the soil for some months of every winter and comes to life again, as from the grave, in the sprouting cornstalks and the opening flowers and foliage of every spring. No other reasonable and probable explanation of Persephone seems possible. And if the daughter goddess

was a personification of the young corn of the present year, may not the mother goddess be a personification of the old corn of last year, which has given birth to the new crops? The only alternative to this view of Demeter would seem to be to suppose that she is a personification of the earth, from whose broad bosom the corn and all other plants spring up, and of which accordingly they may appropriately enough be regarded as the daughters. This view of the original nature of Demeter has indeed been taken by some writers, both ancient and modern, and it is one which can be reasonably maintained. But it appears to have been rejected by the author of the Homeric hymn to Demeter, for he not only distinguishes Demeter from the personified Earth but places the two in the sharpest opposition to each other. He tells us that it was Earth who, in accordance with the will of Zeus and to please Pluto, lured Persephone to her doom by causing the narcissuses to grow which tempted the young goddess to stray far beyond the reach of help in the lush meadow. Thus Demeter of the hymn, far from being identical with the Earth-goddess, must have regarded that divinity as her worst enemy, since it was to her insidious wiles that she owed the loss of her daughter. But if the Demeter of the hymn cannot have been a personification of the earth, the only alternative apparently is to conclude that she was a personification of the corn.

The conclusion is confirmed by the monuments; for in ancient art Demeter and Persephone are alike characterised as goddesses of the corn by the crowns of corn which they wear on their heads and by the stalks of corn which they hold in their hands. Again, it was Demeter who first revealed to the Athenians the secret of the corn and diffused the beneficent discovery far and wide through the agency of Triptolemus, whom she sent forth as an itinerant missionary to communicate the boon to all mankind. On monuments of art, especially in vase-paintings, he is constantly represented along with Demeter in this capacity, holding corn-stalks in his hand and sitting in his car, which is sometimes winged and sometimes drawn by dragons, and from which he is said to have sowed the seed down on the whole world as he sped through the air. In gratitude for the priceless boon many Greek cities long continued to send the first-fruits of their barley and wheat harvests as thank-offerings to the Two Goddesses, Demeter and Persephone, at Eleusis, where subterranean granaries were built to store the overflowing contributions. Theocritus tells how in the island of Cos, in the sweet-scented summer time, the farmer brought the first-fruits of the harvest to Demeter who had filled his threshing-floor with barley, and whose rustic image held sheaves and poppies in her hands. Many of the epithets bestowed by the ancients on Demeter mark her intimate association with the corn in the clearest manner.

How deeply implanted in the mind of the ancient Greeks was this faith in Demeter as goddess of the corn may be judged by the circumstance that the faith actually persisted among their Christian descendants

at her old sanctuary of Eleusis down to the beginning of the nineteenth century. For when the English traveller Dodwell revisited Eleusis, the inhabitants lamented to him the loss of a colossal image of Demeter, which was carried off by Clarke in 1802 and presented to the University of Cambridge, where it still remains. "In my first journey to Greece," says Dodwell, "this protecting deity was in its full glory, situated in the centre of a threshing-floor, amongst the ruins of her temple. The villagers were impressed with a persuasion that their rich harvests were the effect of her bounty, and since her removal, their abundance, as they assured me, has disappeared." Thus we see the Corn Goddess Demeter standing on the threshing-floor of Eleusis and dispensing corn to her worshippers in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, precisely as her image stood and dispensed corn to her worshippers on the threshing-floor of Cos in the days of Theocritus. And just as the people of Eleusis in the nineteenth century attributed the diminution of their harvests to the loss of the image of Demeter, so in antiquity the Sicilians, a corn-growing people devoted to the worship of the two Corn Goddesses, lamented that the crops of many towns had perished because the unscrupulous Roman governor Verres had impiously carried off the image of Demeter from her famous temple at Henna. Could we ask for a clearer proof that Demeter was indeed the goddess of the corn than this belief, held by the Greeks down to modern times, that the corn-crops depended on her presence and bounty and perished when her image was removed?

On the whole, then, if, ignoring theories, we adhere to the evidence of the ancients themselves in regard to the rites of Eleusis, we shall probably incline to agree with the most learned of ancient antiquaries, the Roman Varro, who, to quote Augustine's report of his opinion, "interpreted the whole of the Eleusinian mysteries as relating to the corn which Ceres (Demeter) had discovered, and to Proserpine (Persephone), whom Pluto had carried off from her. And Proserpine herself, he said, signifies the fecundity of the seeds, the failure of which at a certain time had caused the earth to mourn for barrenness, and therefore had given rise to the opinion that the daughter of Ceres, that is, fecundity itself, had been ravished by Pluto and detained in the nether world; and when the dearth had been publicly mourned and fecundity had returned once more, there was gladness at the return of Proserpine and solemn rites were instituted accordingly. After that he says," continues Augustine, reporting Varro, "that many things were taught in her mysteries which had no reference but to the discovery of the corn."

Thus far I have for the most part assumed an identity of nature between Demeter and Persephone, the divine mother and daughter personifying the corn in its double aspect of the seed-corn of last year and the ripe ears of this, and this view of the substantial unity of mother and daughter is borne out by their portraits in Greek art, which are often so alike as to be indistinguishable. Such a close resemblance between the artistic types of Demeter and Persephone

militates decidedly against the view that the two goddesses are mythical embodiments of two things so different and so easily distinguishable from each other as the earth and the vegetation which springs from it. Had Greek artists accepted that view of Demeter and Persephone, they could surely have devised types of them which would have brought out the deep distinction between the goddesses. And if Demeter did not personify the earth, can there be any reasonable doubt that, like her daughter, she personified the corn which was so commonly called by her name from the time of Homer downwards? The essential identity of mother and daughter is suggested, not only by the close resemblance of their artistic types, but also by the official title of "the Two Goddesses" which was regularly applied to them in the great sanctuary at Eleusis without any specification of their individual attributes and titles, as if their separate individualities had almost merged in a single divine substance.

Surveying the evidence as a whole, we are fairly entitled to conclude that in the mind of the ordinary Greek the two goddesses were essentially personifications of the corn, and that in this germ the whole efflorescence of their religion finds implicitly its explanation. But to maintain this is not to deny that in the long course of religious evolution high moral and spiritual conceptions were grafted on this simple original stock and blossomed out into fairer flowers than the bloom of the barley and the wheat. Above all, the thought of the seed buried in the earth in order to spring up to new and higher life readily suggested a comparison with human destiny, and strengthened the hope that for man too the grave may be but the beginning of a better and happier existence in some brighter world unknown. This simple and natural reflection seems perfectly sufficient to explain the association of the Corn Goddess at Eleusis with the mystery of death and the hope of a blissful immortality. For that the ancients regarded initiation in the Eleusinian mysteries as a key to unlock the gates of Paradise appears to be proved by the allusions which well-informed writers among them drop to the happiness in store for the initiated hereafter. No doubt it is easy for us to discern the flimsiness of the logical foundation on which such high hopes were built. But drowning men clutch at straws, and we need not wonder that the Greeks, like ourselves, with death before them and a great love of life in their hearts, should not have stopped to weigh with too nice a hand the arguments that told for and against the prospect of human immortality. The reasoning that satisfied Saint Paul and has brought comfort to untold thousands of sorrowing Christians, standing by the deathbed or the open grave of their loved ones, was good enough to pass muster with ancient pagans, when they too bowed their heads under the burden of grief, and, with the taper of life burning low in the socket, looked forward into the darkness of the unknown. Therefore we do no indignity to the myth of Demeter and Persephone—one of the few myths in which the sunshine and clarity of the Greek genius are crossed by the shadow and mystery of death—when we trace its

origin to some of the most familiar, yet eternally affecting aspects of nature, to the melancholy gloom and decay of autumn and to the freshness, the brightness, and the verdure of spring.

CHAPTER XLV

THE CORN-MOTHER AND THE CORN-MAIDEN IN NORTHERN EUROPE

It has been argued by W. Mannhardt that the first part of Demeter's name is derived from an alleged Cretan word *deai*, "barley," and that accordingly Demeter means neither more nor less than "Barley-mother" or "Corn-mother"; for the root of the word seems to have been applied to different kinds of grain by different branches of the Aryans. As Crete appears to have been one of the most ancient seats of the worship of Demeter, it would not be surprising if her name were of Cretan origin. But the etymology is open to serious objections, and it is safer therefore to lay no stress on it. Be that as it may, we have found independent reasons for identifying Demeter as the Corn-mother, and of the two species of corn associated with her in Greek religion, namely barley and wheat, the barley has perhaps the better claim to be her original element; for not only would it seem to have been the staple food of the Greeks in the Homeric age, but there are grounds for believing that it is one of the oldest, if not the very oldest, cereal cultivated by the Aryan race. Certainly the use of barley in the religious ritual of the ancient Hindoos as well as of the ancient Greeks furnishes a strong argument in favour of the great antiquity of its cultivation, which is known to have been practised by the lake-dwellers of the Stone Age in Europe.

Analogies to the Corn-mother or Barley-mother of ancient Greece have been collected in great abundance by W. Mannhardt from the folk-lore of modern Europe. The following may serve as specimens.

In Germany the corn is very commonly personified under the name of the Corn-mother. Thus in spring, when the corn waves in the wind, the peasants say, "There comes the Corn-mother," or "The Corn-mother is running over the field," or "The Corn-mother is going through the corn." When children wish to go into the fields to pull the blue corn-flowers or the red poppies, they are told not to do so, because the Corn-mother is sitting in the corn and will catch them. Or again she is called, according to the crop, the Rye-mother or the Pea-mother, and children are warned against straying in the rye or among the peas by threats of the Rye-mother or the Pea-mother. Again the Corn-mother is believed to make the crop grow. Thus in the neighbourhood of Magdeburg it is sometimes said, "It will be a good year for flax; the Flax-mother has been seen." In a village of Styria it is said that the Corn-mother, in the shape of a female puppet made out of the last sheaf of corn and dressed in white, may be seen at mid-

night in the corn-fields, which she fertilises by passing through them; but if she is angry with a farmer, she withers up all his corn.

Further, the Corn-mother plays an important part in harvest customs. She is believed to be present in the handful of corn which is left standing last on the field; and with the cutting of this last handful she is caught, or driven away, or killed. In the first of these cases, the last sheaf is carried joyfully home and honoured as a divine being. It is placed in the barn, and at threshing the corn-spirit appears again. In the Hanoverian district of Hadeln the reapers stand round the last sheaf and beat it with sticks in order to drive the Corn-mother out of it. They call to each other, "There she is! hit her! Take care she doesn't catch you!" The beating goes on till the grain is completely threshed out; then the Corn-mother is believed to be driven away. In the neighbourhood of Danzig the person who cuts the last ears of corn makes them into a doll, which is called the Corn-mother or the Old Woman and is brought home on the last waggon. In some parts of Holstein the last sheaf is dressed in woman's clothes and called the Corn-mother. It is carried home on the last waggon, and then thoroughly drenched with water. The drenching with water is doubtless a rain-charm. In the district of Bruck in Styria the last sheaf, called the Corn-mother, is made up into the shape of a woman by the oldest married woman in the village, of an age from fifty to fifty-five years. The finest ears are plucked out of it and made into a wreath, which, twined with flowers, is carried on her head by the prettiest girl of the village to the farmer or squire, while the Corn-mother is laid down in the barn to keep off the mice. In other villages of the same district the Corn-mother, at the close of harvest, is carried by two lads at the top of a pole. They march behind the girl who wears the wreath to the squire's house, and while he receives the wreath and hangs it up in the hall, the Corn-mother is placed on the top of a pile of wood, where she is the centre of the harvest supper and dance. Afterwards she is hung up in the barn and remains there till the threshing is over. The man who gives the last stroke at threshing is called the son of the Corn-mother; he is tied up in the Corn-mother, beaten, and carried through the village. The wreath is dedicated in church on the following Sunday; and on Easter Eve the grain is rubbed out of it by a seven-year-old girl and scattered amongst the young corn. At Christmas the straw of the wreath is placed in the manger to make the cattle thrive. Here the fertilising power of the Corn-mother is plainly brought out by scattering the seed taken from her body (for the wreath is made out of the Corn-mother) among the new corn; and her influence over animal life is indicated by placing the straw in the manger. Amongst the Slavs also the last sheaf is known as the Rye-mother, the Wheat-mother, the Oats-mother, the Barley-mother, and so on, according to the crop. In the district of Tarnow, Galicia, the wreath made out of the last stalks is called the Wheat-mother, Rye-mother, or Pea-mother. It is placed on a girl's head and kept till spring, when some of the

grain is mixed with the seed-corn. Here again the fertilising power of the Corn-mother is indicated. In France, also, in the neighbourhood of Auxerre, the last sheaf goes by the name of the Mother of the Wheat, Mother of the Barley, Mother of the Rye, or Mother of the Oats. They leave it standing in the field till the last waggon is about to wend homewards. Then they make a puppet out of it, dress it with clothes belonging to the farmer, and adorn it with a crown and a blue or white scarf. A branch of a tree is stuck in the breast of the puppet, which is now called the Ceres. At the dance in the evening the Ceres is set in the middle of the floor, and the reaper who reaped fastest dances round it with the prettiest girl for his partner. After the dance a pyre is made. All the girls, each wearing a wreath, strip the puppet, pull it to pieces, and place it on the pyre, along with the flowers with which it was adorned. Then the girl who was the first to finish reaping sets fire to the pile, and all pray that Ceres may give a fruitful year. Here, as Mannhardt observes, the old custom has remained intact, though the name Ceres is a bit of schoolmaster's learning. In Upper Brittany the last sheaf is always made into human shape; but if the farmer is a married man, it is made double and consists of a little corn-puppet placed inside of a large one. This is called the Mother-sheaf. It is delivered to the farmer's wife, who unties it and gives drink-money in return.

Sometimes the last sheaf is called, not the Corn-mother, but the Harvest-mother or the Great Mother. In the province of Osnabrück, Hanover, it is called the Harvest-mother; it is made up in female form, and then the reapers dance about with it. In some parts of Westphalia the last sheaf at the rye-harvest is made especially heavy by fastening stones in it. They bring it home on the last waggon and call it the Great Mother, though they do not fashion it into any special shape. In the district of Erfurt a very heavy sheaf, not necessarily the last, is called the Great Mother, and is carried on the last waggon to the barn, where all hands lift it down amid a fire of jokes.

Sometimes again the last sheaf is called the Grandmother, and is adorned with flowers, ribbons, and a woman's apron. In East Prussia, at the rye or wheat harvest, the reapers call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "You are getting the Old Grandmother." In the neighbourhood of Magdeburg the men and women servants strive who shall get the last sheaf, called the Grandmother. Whoever gets it will be married in the next year, but his or her spouse will be old; if a girl gets it, she will marry a widower; if a man gets it, he will marry an old crone. In Silesia the Grandmother—a huge bundle made up of three or four sheaves by the person who tied the last sheaf—was formerly fashioned into a rude likeness of the human form. In the neighbourhood of Belfast the last sheaf sometimes goes by the name of the Granny. It is not cut in the usual way, but all the reapers throw their sickles at it and try to bring it down. It is plaited and kept till the (next?) autumn. Whoever gets it will marry in the course of the year.

Often the last sheaf is called the Old Woman or the Old Man. In Germany it is frequently shaped and dressed as a woman, and the person who cuts it or binds it is said to "get the Old Woman." At Altisheim, in Swabia, when all the corn of a farm has been cut except a single strip, all the reapers stand in a row before the strip; each cuts his share rapidly, and he who gives the last cut "has the Old Woman." When the sheaves are being set up in heaps, the person who gets hold of the Old Woman, which is the largest and thickest of all the sheaves, is jeered at by the rest, who call out to him, "He has the Old Woman and must keep her." The woman who binds the last sheaf is sometimes herself called the Old Woman, and it is said that she will be married in the next year. In Neusaass, West Prussia, both the last sheaf—which is dressed up in jacket, hat, and ribbons—and the woman who binds it are called the Old Woman. Together they are brought home on the last waggon and are drenched with water. In various parts of North Germany the last sheaf at harvest is made up into a human effigy and called "the Old Man"; and the woman who bound it is said "to have the Old Man."

In West Prussia, when the last rye is being raked together, the women and girls hurry with the work, for none of them likes to be the last and to get "the Old Man," that is, a puppet made out of the last sheaf, which must be carried before the other reapers by the person who was the last to finish. In Silesia the last sheaf is called the Old Woman or the Old Man and is the theme of many jests; it is made unusually large and is sometimes weighted with a stone. Among the Wends the man or woman who binds the last sheaf at wheat harvest is said to "have the Old Man." A puppet is made out of the wheaten straw and ears in the likeness of a man and decked with flowers. The person who bound the last sheaf must carry the Old Man home, while the rest laugh and jeer at him. The puppet is hung up in the farmhouse and remains till a new Old Man is made at the next harvest.

In some of these customs, as Mannhardt has remarked, the person who is called by the same name as the last sheaf and sits beside it on the last waggon is obviously identified with it; he or she represents the corn-spirit which has been caught in the last sheaf; in other words, the corn-spirit is represented in duplicate, by a human being and by a sheaf. The identification of the person with the sheaf is made still clearer by the custom of wrapping up in the last sheaf the person who cuts or binds it. Thus at Hermsdorf in Silesia it used to be the regular practice to tie up in the last sheaf the woman who had bound it. At Weiden, in Bavaria, it is the cutter, not the binder, of the last sheaf who is tied up in it. Here the person wrapt up in the corn represents the corn-spirit, exactly as a person wrapt in branches or leaves represents the tree-spirit.

The last sheaf, designated as the Old Woman, is often distinguished from the other sheaves by its size and weight. Thus in some villages of West Prussia the Old Woman is made twice as long and thick as a

common sheaf, and a stone is fastened in the middle of it. Sometimes it is made so heavy that a man can barely lift it. At Alt-Pillau, in Samland, eight or nine sheaves are often tied together to make the Old Woman, and the man who sets it up grumbles at its weight. At Itzgrund, in Saxe-Coburg, the last sheaf, called the Old Woman, is made large with the express intention of thereby securing a good crop next year. Thus the custom of making the last sheaf unusually large or heavy is a charm, working by sympathetic magic, to ensure a large and heavy crop at the following harvest.

In Scotland, when the last corn was cut after Hallowmas, the female figure made out of it was sometimes called the Carlin or Carline, that is, the Old Woman. But if cut before Hallowmas, it was called the Maiden; if cut after sunset, it was called the Witch, being supposed to bring bad luck. Among the Highlanders of Scotland the last corn cut at harvest is known either as the Old Wife (*Cailleach*) or as the Maiden; on the whole the former name seems to prevail in the western and the latter in the central and eastern districts. Of the Maiden we shall speak presently; here we are dealing with the Old Wife. The following general account of the custom is given by a careful and well-informed enquirer, the Rev. J. G. Campbell, minister of the remote Hebridean island of Tiree: "The Harvest Old Wife (*a Cailleach*).—In harvest, there was a struggle to escape from being the last done with the shearing, and when tillage in common existed, instances were known of a ridge being left unshorn (no person would claim it) because of it being behind the rest. The fear entertained was that of having the 'famine of the farm' (*gort a bhaile*), in the shape of an imaginary old woman (*cailleach*), to feed till next harvest. Much emulation and amusement arose from the fear of this old woman. .... The first done made a doll of some blades of corn, which was called the 'old wife,' and sent it to his nearest neighbour. He in turn, when ready, passed it to another still less expeditious, and the person it last remained with had 'the old woman' to keep for that year."

In the island of Islay the last corn cut goes by the name of the Old Wife (*Cailleach*), and when she has done her duty at harvest she is hung up on the wall and stays there till the time comes to plough the fields for the next year's crop. Then she is taken down, and on the first day when the men go to plough she is divided among them by the mistress of the house. They take her in their pockets and give her to the horses to eat when they reach the field. This is supposed to secure good luck for the next harvest, and is understood to be the proper end of the Old Wife.

Usages of the same sort are reported from Wales. Thus in North Pembrokeshire a tuft of the last corn cut, from six to twelve inches long, is plaited and goes by the name of the Hag (*wrach*); and quaint old customs used to be practised with it within the memory of many persons still alive. Great was the excitement among the reapers when the last patch of standing corn was reached. All in turn threw their sickles at it, and the one who succeeded in cutting it received a

jug of home-brewed ale. The Hag (*wrach*) was then hurriedly made and taken to a neighbouring farm, where the reapers were still busy at their work. This was generally done by the ploughman; but he had to be very careful not to be observed by his neighbours, for if they saw him coming and had the least suspicion of his errand they would soon make him retrace his steps. Creeping stealthily up behind a fence he waited till the foreman of his neighbour's reapers was just opposite him and within easy reach. Then he suddenly threw the Hag over the fence and, if possible, upon the foreman's sickle. On that he took to his heels and made off as fast as he could run, and he was a lucky man if he escaped without being caught or cut by the flying sickles which the infuriated reapers hurled after him. In other cases the Hag was brought home to the farmhouse by one of the reapers. He did his best to bring it home dry and without being observed; but he was apt to be roughly handled by the people of the house, if they suspected his errand. Sometimes they stripped him of most of his clothes, sometimes they would drench him with water which had been carefully stored in buckets and pans for the purpose. If, however, he succeeded in bringing the Hag in dry and unobserved, the master of the house had to pay him a small fine; or sometimes a jug of beer "from the cask next to the wall," which seems to have commonly held the best beer, would be demanded by the bearer. The Hag was then carefully hung on a nail in the hall or elsewhere and kept there all the year. The custom of bringing in the Hag (*wrach*) into the house and hanging it up still exists in some farms of North Pembrokeshire, but the ancient ceremonies which have just been described are now discontinued.

In County Antrim, down to some years ago, when the sickle was finally expelled by the reaping machine, the few stalks of corn left standing last on the field were plaited together; then the reapers, blindfolded, threw their sickles at the plaited corn, and whoever happened to cut it through took it home with him and put it over his door. This bunch of corn was called the Carley—probably the same word as Carlin.

Similar customs are observed by Slavonic peoples. Thus in Poland the last sheaf is commonly called the Baba, that is, the Old Woman. "In the last sheaf," it is said, "sits the Baba." The sheaf itself is also called the Baba, and is sometimes composed of twelve smaller sheaves lashed together. In some parts of Bohemia the Baba, made out of the last sheaf, has the figure of a woman with a great straw hat. It is carried home on the last harvest-waggon and delivered, along with a garland, to the farmer by two girls. In binding the sheaves the women strive not to be last, for she who binds the last sheaf will have a child next year. Sometimes the harvesters call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "She has the Baba," or "She is the Baba." In the district of Cracow, when a man binds the last sheaf, they say, "The Grandfather is sitting in it"; when a woman binds it, they say, "The Baba is sitting in it," and the woman

herself is wrapt up in the sheaf, so that only her head projects out of it. Thus encased in the sheaf, she is carried on the last harvest-waggon to the house, where she is drenched with water by the whole family. She remains in the sheaf till the dance is over, and for a year she retains the name of Baba.

In Lithuania the name for the last sheaf is Boba (Old Woman), answering to the Polish name Baba. The Boba is said to sit in the corn which is left standing last. The person who binds the last sheaf or digs the last potato is the subject of much banter, and receives and long retains the name of the Old Rye-woman or the Old Potato-woman. The last sheaf—the Boba—is made into the form of a woman, carried solemnly through the village on the last harvest-waggon, and drenched with water at the farmer's house; then every one dances with it.

In Russia also the last sheaf is often shaped and dressed as a woman, and carried with dance and song to the farmhouse. Out of the last sheaf the Bulgarians make a doll which they call the Corn-queen or Corn-mother; it is dressed in a woman's shirt, carried round the village, and then thrown into the river in order to secure plenty of rain and dew for the next year's crop. Or it is burned and the ashes strew on the fields, doubtless to fertilise them. The name Queen, as applied to the last sheaf, has its analogies in Central and Northern Europe. Thus, in the Salzburg district of Austria, at the end of the harvest a great procession takes place, in which a Queen of the Corn-ears (*Ährenkönigin*) is drawn along in a little carriage by young fellows. The custom of the Harvest Queen appears to have been common in England. Milton must have been familiar with it, for in *Paradise Lost* he says:

> *"Adam the while*
> *Waiting desirous her return, had wove*
> *Of choicest flow'rs a garland to adorn*
> *Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,*
> *As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen."*

Often customs of this sort are practised, not on the harvest-field but on the threshing-floor. The spirit of the corn, fleeing before the reapers as they cut down the ripe grain, quits the reaped corn and takes refuge in the barn, where it appears in the last sheaf threshed, either to perish under the blows of the flail or to flee thence to the still unthreshed corn of a neighbouring farm. Thus the last corn to be threshed is called the Mother-Corn or the Old Woman. Sometimes the person who gives the last stroke with the flail is called the Old Woman, and is wrapt in the straw of the last sheaf, or has a bundle of straw fastened on his back. Whether wrapt in the straw or carrying it on his back, he is carted through the village amid general laughter. In some districts of Bavaria, Thüringen, and elsewhere, the man who threshes the last sheaf is said to have the Old Woman or the Old Corn-woman; he is tied up in straw, carried or carted about the

village, and set down at last on the dunghill, or taken to the threshing-floor of a neighbouring farmer who has not finished his threshing. In Poland the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is called Baba (Old Woman); he is wrapt in corn and wheeled through the village. Sometimes in Lithuania the last sheaf is not threshed, but is fashioned into female shape and carried to the barn of a neighbour who has not finished his threshing.

In some parts of Sweden, when a stranger woman appears on the threshing-floor, a flail is put round her body, stalks of corn are wound round her neck, a crown of ears is placed on her head, and the threshers call out, "Behold the Corn-woman." Here the stranger woman, thus suddenly appearing, is taken to be the corn-spirit who has just been expelled by the flails from the corn-stalks. In other cases the farmer's wife represents the corn-spirit. Thus in the Commune of Saligné (Vendée), the farmer's wife, along with the last sheaf, is tied up in a sheet, placed on a litter, and carried to the threshing machine, under which she is shoved. Then the woman is drawn out and the sheaf is threshed by itself, but the woman is tossed in the sheet, as if she were being winnowed. It would be impossible to express more clearly the identification of the woman with the corn than by this graphic imitation of threshing and winnowing her.

In these customs the spirit of the ripe corn is regarded as old, or at least as of mature age. Hence the names of Mother, Grandmother, Old Woman, and so forth. But in other cases the corn-spirit is conceived as young. Thus at Saldern, near Wolfenbuttel, when the rye has been reaped, three sheaves are tied together with a rope so as to make a puppet with the corn ears for a head. This puppet is called the Maiden or the Corn-maiden. Sometimes the corn-spirit is conceived as a child who is separated from its mother by the stroke of the sickle. This last view appears in the Polish custom of calling out to the man who cuts the last handful of corn, "You have cut the navel-string." In some districts of West Prussia the figure made out of the last sheaf is called the Bastard, and a boy is wrapt up in it. The woman who binds the last sheaf and represents the Corn-mother is told that she is about to be brought to bed; she cries like a woman in travail, and an old woman in the character of grandmother acts as midwife. At last a cry is raised that the child is born; whereupon the boy who is tied up in the sheaf whimpers and squalls like an infant. The grandmother wraps a sack, in imitation of swaddling bands, round the pretended baby, who is carried joyfully to the barn, lest he should catch cold in the open air. In other parts of North Germany the last sheaf, or the puppet made out of it, is called the Child, the Harvest-Child, and so on, and they call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "you are getting the child."

In some parts of Scotland, as well as in the north of England, the last handful of corn cut on the harvest-field was called the *kirn*, and the person who carried it off was said "to win the kirn." It was then dressed up like a child's doll and went by the name of the

kirn-baby, the kirn-doll, or the Maiden. In Berwickshire down to about the middle of the nineteenth century there was an eager competition among the reapers to cut the last bunch of standing corn. They gathered round it at a little distance and threw their sickles in turn at it, and the man who succeeded in cutting it through gave it to the girl he preferred. She made the corn so cut into a kirn-dolly and dressed it, and the doll was then taken to the farm-house and hung up there till the next harvest, when its place was taken by the new kirn-dolly. At Spottiswoode in Berwickshire the reaping of the last corn at harvest was called "cutting the Queen" almost as often as "cutting the kirn." The mode of cutting it was not by throwing sickles. One of the reapers consented to be blind-folded, and having been given a sickle in his hand and turned twice or thrice about by his fellows, he was bidden to go and cut the kirn. His groping about and making wild strokes in the air with his sickle excited much hilarity. When he had tired himself out in vain and given up the task as hopeless, another reaper was blindfolded and pursued the quest, and so on, one after the other, till at last the kirn was cut. The successful reaper was tossed up in the air with three cheers by his brother harvesters. To decorate the room in which the kirn-supper was held at Spottiswoode as well as the granary, where the dancing took place, two women made kirn-dollies or Queens every year; and many of these rustic effigies of the corn-spirit might be seen hanging up together.

In some parts of the Highlands of Scotland the last handful of corn that is cut by the reapers on any particular farm is called the Maiden, or in Gaelic *Maidhdeanbuain*, literally, "the shorn Maiden." Superstitions attach to the winning of the Maiden. If it is got by a young person, they think it an omen that he or she will be married before another harvest. For that or other reasons there is a strife between the reapers as to who shall get the Maiden, and they resort to various stratagems for the purpose of securing it. One of them, for example, will often leave a handful of corn uncut and cover it up with earth to hide it from the other reapers, till all the rest of the corn on the field is cut down. Several may try to play the same trick, and the one who is coolest and holds out longest obtains the coveted distinction. When it has been cut, the Maiden is dressed with ribbons into a sort of doll and affixed to a wall of the farmhouse. In the north of Scotland the Maiden is carefully preserved till Yule morning, when it is divided among the cattle "to make them thrive all the year round." In the neighbourhood of Balquhidder, Perth-shire, the last handful of corn is cut by the youngest girl on the field, and is made into the rude form of a female doll, clad in a paper dress, and decked with ribbons. It is called the Maiden, and is kept in the farmhouse, generally above the chimney, for a good while, some-times till the Maiden of the next year is brought in. The writer of this book witnessed the ceremony of cutting the Maiden at Balquhidder in September 1888. A lady friend informed me that as a young girl

she cut the Maiden several times at the request of the reapers in the neighbourhood of Perth. The name of the Maiden was given to the last handful of standing corn; a reaper held the top of the bunch while she cut it. Afterwards the bunch was plaited, decked with ribbons, and hung up in a conspicuous place on the wall of the kitchen till the next Maiden was brought in. The harvest-supper in this neighbourhood was also called the Maiden; the reapers danced at it.

On some farms on the Gareloch, in Dumbartonshire, about the year 1830, the last handful of standing corn was called the Maiden. It was divided in two, plaited, and then cut with the sickle by a girl, who, it was thought, would be lucky and would soon be married. When it was cut the reapers gathered together and threw their sickles in the air. The Maiden was dressed with ribbons and hung in the kitchen near the roof, where it was kept for several years with the date attached. Sometimes five or six Maidens might be seen hanging at once on hooks. The harvest-supper was called the Kirn. In other farms on the Gareloch the last handful of corn was called the Maidenhead or the Head; it was neatly plaited, sometimes decked with ribbons, and hung in the kitchen for a year, when the grain was given to the poultry.

In Aberdeenshire "the last sheaf cut, or 'Maiden,' is carried home in merry procession by the harvesters. It is then presented to the mistress of the house, who dresses it up to be preserved till the first mare foals. The Maiden is then taken down and presented to the mare as its first food. The neglect of this would have untoward effects upon the foal, and disastrous consequences upon farm operations generally for the season." In the north-east of Aberdeenshire the last sheaf is commonly called the *clyack* sheaf. It used to be cut by the youngest girl present and was dressed as a woman. Being brought home in triumph, it was kept till Christmas morning, and then given to a mare in foal, if there was one on the farm, or, if there was not, to the oldest cow in calf. Elsewhere the sheaf was divided between all the cows and their calves or between all the horses and the cattle of the farm. In Fifeshire the last handful of corn, known as the Maiden, is cut by a young girl and made into the rude figure of a doll, tied with ribbons, by which it is hung on the wall of the farm-kitchen till the next spring. The custom of cutting the Maiden at harvest was also observed in Inverness-shire and Sutherlandshire.

A somewhat maturer but still youthful age is assigned to the corn-spirit by the appellations of Bride, Oats-bride, and Wheat-bride, which in Germany are sometimes bestowed both on the last sheaf and on the woman who binds it. At wheat-harvest near Müglitz, in Moravia, a small portion of the wheat is left standing after all the rest has been reaped. This remnant is then cut, amid the rejoicing of the reapers, by a young girl who wears a wreath of wheaten ears on her head and goes by the name of the Wheat-bride. It is supposed that she will be a real bride that same year. Near Roslin and Stonehaven, in Scotland, the last handful of corn cut "got the name of 'the bride,'

and she was placed over the *bress* or chimney-piece; she had a ribbon tied below her numerous *ears*, and another round her waist."

Sometimes the idea implied by the name of Bride is worked out more fully by representing the productive powers of vegetation as bride and bridegroom. Thus in the Vorharz an Oats-man and an Oats-woman, swathed in straw, dance at the harvest feast. In South Saxony an Oats-bridegroom and an Oats-bride figure together at the harvest celebration. The Oats-bridegroom is a man completely wrapt in oats-straw; the Oats-bride is a man dressed in woman's clothes, but not wrapt in straw. They are drawn in a waggon to the ale-house, where the dance takes place. At the beginning of the dance the dancers pluck the bunches of oats one by one from the Oats-bridegroom, while he struggles to keep them, till at last he is completely stript of them and stands bare, exposed to the laughter and jests of the company. In Austrian Silesia the ceremony of "the Wheat-bride" is celebrated by the young people at the end of the harvest. The woman who bound the last sheaf plays the part of the Wheat-bride, wearing the harvest-crown of wheat ears and flowers on her head. Thus adorned, standing beside her Bridegroom in a waggon and attended by bridesmaids, she is drawn by a pair of oxen, in full imitation of a marriage procession, to the tavern, where the dancing is kept up till morning. Somewhat later in the season the wedding of the Oats-bride is celebrated with the like rustic pomp. About Neisse, in Silesia, an Oats-king and an Oats-queen, dressed up quaintly as a bridal pair, are seated on a harrow and drawn by oxen into the village.

In these last instances the corn-spirit is personified in double form as male and female. But sometimes the spirit appears in a double female form as both old and young, corresponding exactly to the Greek Demeter and Persephone, if my interpretation of these goddesses is right. We have seen that in Scotland, especially among the Gaelic-speaking population, the last corn cut is sometimes called the Old Wife and sometimes the Maiden. Now there are parts of Scotland in which both an Old Wife (*Cailleach*) and a Maiden are cut at harvest. The accounts of this custom are not quite clear and consistent, but the general rule seems to be that, where both a Maiden and an Old Wife (*Cailleach*) are fashioned out of the reaped corn at harvest, the Maiden is made out of the last stalks left standing, and is kept by the farmer on whose land it was cut; while the Old Wife is made out of other stalks, sometimes out of the first stalks cut, and is regularly passed on to a laggard farmer who happens to be still reaping after his brisker neighbour has cut all his corn. Thus while each farmer keeps his own Maiden, as the embodiment of the young and fruitful spirit of the corn, he passes on the Old Wife as soon as he can to a neighbour, and so the old lady may make the round of all the farms in the district before she finds a place in which to lay her venerable head. The farmer with whom she finally takes up her abode is of course the one who has been the last of all the countryside to finish reaping his crops, and thus the distinction of entertaining her is rather an invidious one. He is

thought to be doomed to poverty or to be under the obligation of "providing for the dearth of the township" in the ensuing season. Similarly we saw that in Pembrokeshire, where the last corn cut is called, not the Maiden, but the Hag, she is passed on hastily to a neighbour who is still at work in his fields and who receives his aged visitor with anything but a transport of joy. If the Old Wife represents the corn-spirit of the past year, as she probably does wherever she is contrasted with and opposed to a Maiden, it is natural enough that her faded charms should have less attractions for the husbandman than the buxom form of her daughter, who may be expected to become in her turn the mother of the golden grain when the revolving year has brought round another autumn. The same desire to get rid of the effete Mother of the Corn by palming her off on other people comes out clearly in some of the customs observed at the close of threshing, particularly in the practice of passing on a hideous straw puppet to a neighbour farmer who is still threshing his corn.

The harvest customs just described are strikingly analogous to the spring customs which we reviewed in an earlier part of this work. (1) As in the spring customs the tree-spirit is represented both by a tree and by a person, so in the harvest customs the corn-spirit is represented both by the last sheaf and by the person who cuts or binds or threshes it. The equivalence of the person to the sheaf is shown by giving him or her the same name as the sheaf; by wrapping him or her in it; and by the rule observed in some places, that when the sheaf is called the Mother, it must be made up into human shape by the oldest married woman, but that when it is called the Maiden, it must be cut by the youngest girl. Here the age of the personal representative of the corn-spirit corresponds with that of the supposed age of the corn-spirit, just as the human victims offered by the Mexicans to promote the growth of the maize varied with the age of the maize. For in the Mexican, as in the European, custom the human beings were probably representatives of the corn-spirit rather than victims offered to it. (2) Again the same fertilising influence which the tree-spirit is supposed to exert over vegetation, cattle, and even women is ascribed to the corn-spirit. Thus, its supposed influence on vegetation is shown by the practice of taking some of the grain of the last sheaf (in which the corn-spirit is regularly supposed to be present), and scattering it among the young corn in spring or mixing it with the seed-corn. Its influence on animals is shown by giving the last sheaf to a mare in foal, to a cow in calf, and to horses at the first ploughing. Lastly, its influence on women is indicated by the custom of delivering the Mother-sheaf, made into the likeness of a pregnant woman, to the farmer's wife; by the belief that the woman who binds the last sheaf will have a child next year; perhaps, too, by the idea that the person who gets it will soon be married.

Plainly, therefore, these spring and harvest customs are based on the same ancient modes of thought, and form parts of the same primitive heathendom, which was doubtless practised by our forefathers long

before the dawn of history. Amongst the marks of a primitive ritual we may note the following:

1. No special class of persons is set apart for the performance of the rites; in other words, there are no priests. The rites may be performed by any one, as occasion demands.

2. No special places are set apart for the performance of the rites; in other words, there are no temples. The rites may be performed anywhere, as occasion demands.

3. Spirits, not gods, are recognised. (*a*) As distinguished from gods, spirits are restricted in their operations to definite departments of nature. Their names are general, not proper. Their attributes are generic, rather than individual; in other words, there is an indefinite number of spirits of each class, and the individuals of a class are all much alike; they have no definitely marked individuality; no accepted traditions are current as to their origin, life, adventures, and character. (*b*) On the other hand gods, as distinguished from spirits, are not restricted to definite departments of nature. It is true that there is generally some one department over which they preside as their special province; but they are not rigorously confined to it; they can exert their power for good or evil in many other spheres of nature and life. Again, they bear individual or proper names, such as Demeter, Persephone, Dionysus; and their individual characters and histories are fixed by current myths and the representations of art.

4. The rites are magical rather than propitiatory. In other words, the desired objects are attained, not by propitiating the favour of divine beings through sacrifice, prayer, and praise, but by ceremonies which, as I have already explained, are believed to influence the course of nature directly through a physical sympathy or resemblance between the rite and the effect which it is the intention of the rite to produce.

Judged by these tests, the spring and harvest customs of our European peasantry deserve to rank as primitive. For no special class of persons and no special places are set exclusively apart for their performance; they may be performed by any one, master or man, mistress or maid, boy or girl; they are practised, not in temples or churches, but in the woods and meadows, beside brooks, in barns, on harvest fields and cottage floors. The supernatural beings whose existence is taken for granted in them are spirits rather than deities: their functions are limited to certain well-defined departments of nature: their names are general like the Barley-mother, the Old Woman, the Maiden, not proper names like Demeter, Persephone, Dionysus. Their generic attributes are known, but their individual histories and characters are not the subject of myths. For they exist in classes rather than as individuals, and the members of each class are indistinguishable. For example, every farm has its Corn-mother, or its Old Woman, or its Maiden; but every Corn-mother is much like every other Corn-mother, and so with the Old Women and Maidens. Lastly, in these harvests, as in the spring customs, the ritual is magical rather than propitiatory. This is shown by throwing the Corn-mother

into the river in order to secure rain and dew for the crops; by making the Old Woman heavy in order to get a heavy crop next year; by strewing grain from the last sheaf amongst the young crops in spring; and by giving the last sheaf to the cattle to make them thrive.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE CORN-MOTHER IN MANY LANDS

§ 1. *The Corn-mother in America.*—European peoples, ancient and modern, have not been singular in personifying the corn as a mother goddess. The same simple idea has suggested itself to other agricultural races in distant parts of the world, and has been applied by them to other indigenous cereals than barley and wheat. If Europe has its Wheat-mother and its Barley-mother, America has its Maize-mother and the East Indies their Rice-mother. These personifications I will now illustrate, beginning with the American personification of the maize.

We have seen that among European peoples it is a common custom to keep the plaited corn-stalks of the last sheaf, or the puppet which is formed out of them, in the farm-house from harvest to harvest. The intention no doubt is, or rather originally was, by preserving the representative of the corn-spirit to maintain the spirit itself in life and activity throughout the year, in order that the corn may grow and the crops be good. This interpretation of the custom is at all events rendered highly probable by a similar custom observed by the ancient Peruvians, and thus described by the old Spanish historian Acosta: "They take a certain portion of the most fruitful of the maize that grows in their farms, the which they put in a certain granary which they do call *Pirua,* with certain ceremonies, watching three nights; they put this maize in the richest garments they have, and being thus wrapped and dressed, they worship this *Pirua,* and hold it in great veneration, saying it is the mother of the maize of their inheritances, and that by this means the maize augments and is preserved. In this month [the sixth month, answering to May] they make a particular sacrifice, and the witches demand of this *Pirua* if it hath strength sufficient to continue until the next year; and if it answers no, then they carry this maize to the farm to burn, whence they brought it, according to every man's power; then they make another *Pirua,* with the same ceremonies, saying that they renew it, to the end the seed of maize may not perish, and if it answers that it hath force sufficient to last longer, they leave it until the next year. This foolish vanity continueth to this day, and it is very common amongst the Indians to have these *Piruas.*"

In this description of the custom there seems to be some error. Probably it was the dressed-up bunch of maize, not the granary

(*Pirua*), which was worshipped by the Peruvians and regarded as the Mother of the Maize. This is confirmed by what we know of the Peruvian custom from another source. The Peruvians, we are told, believed all useful plants to be animated by a divine being who causes their growth. According to the particular plant, these divine beings were called the Maize-mother (*Zara-mama*), the Quinoa-mother (*Quinoa-mama*), the Coca-mother (*Coca-mama*), and the Potato-mother (*Axo-mama*). Figures of these divine mothers were made respectively of ears of maize and leaves of the quinoa and coca plants; they were dressed in women's clothes and worshipped. Thus the Maize-mother was represented by a puppet made of stalks of maize dressed in full female attire; and the Indians believed that "as mother, it had the power of producing and giving birth to much maize." Probably, therefore, Acosta misunderstood his informant, and the Mother of the Maize which he describes was not the granary (*Pirua*), but the bunch of maize dressed in rich vestments. The Peruvian Mother of the Maize, like the harvest-Maiden at Balquhidder, was kept for a year in order that by her means the corn might grow and multiply. But lest her strength might not suffice to last till the next harvest, she was asked in the course of the year how she felt, and if she answered that she felt weak, she was burned and a fresh Mother of the Maize made, "to the end the seed of maize may not perish." Here, it may be observed, we have a strong confirmation of the explanation already given of the custom of killing the god, both periodically and occasionally. The Mother of the maize was allowed, as a rule, to live through a year, that being the period during which her strength might reasonably be supposed to last unimpaired; but on any symptom of her strength failing she was put to death, and a fresh and vigorous Mother of the Maize took her place, lest the maize which depended on her for its existence should languish and decay.

§ 2. *The Rice-mother in the East Indies.*—If the reader still feels any doubts as to the meaning of the harvest customs which have been practised within living memory by European peasants, these doubts may perhaps be dispelled by comparing the customs observed at the rice-harvest by the Malays and Dyaks of the East Indies. For these Eastern peoples have not, like our peasantry, advanced beyond the intellectual stage at which the customs originated; their theory and their practice are still in unison; for them the quaint rites which in Europe have long dwindled into mere fossils, the pastime of clowns and the puzzle of the learned, are still living realities of which they can render an intelligible and truthful account. Hence a study of their beliefs and usages concerning the rice may throw some light on the true meaning of the ritual of the corn in ancient Greece and modern Europe.

Now the whole of the ritual which the Malays and Dyaks observe in connexion with the rice is founded on the simple conception of the rice as animated by a soul like that which these people attribute to mankind. They explain the phenomena of reproduction, growth,

decay, and death in the rice on the same principles on which they explain the corresponding phenomena in human beings. They imagine that in the fibres of the plant, as in the body of a man, there is a certain vital element, which is so far independent of the plant that it may for a time be completely separated from it without fatal effects, though if its absence be prolonged beyond certain limits the plant will wither and die. This vital yet separable element is what, for the want of a better word, we must call the soul of a plant, just as a similar vital and separable element is commonly supposed to constitute the soul of man; and on this theory or myth of the plant-soul is built the whole worship of the cereals, just as on the theory or myth of the human soul is built the whole worship of the dead,—a towering superstructure reared on a slender and precarious foundation.

Believing the rice to be animated by a soul like that of a man, the Indonesians naturally treat it with the deference and the consideration which they show to their fellows. Thus they behave towards the rice in bloom as they behave towards a pregnant woman; they abstain from firing guns or making loud noises in the field, lest they should so frighten the soul of the rice that it would miscarry and bear no grain; and for the same reason they will not talk of corpses or demons in the rice-fields. Moreover, they feed the blooming rice with foods of various kinds which are believed to be wholesome for women with child; but when the rice-ears are just beginning to form, they are looked upon as infants, and women go through the fields feeding them with rice-pap as if they were human babes. In such natural and obvious comparisons of the breeding plant to a breeding woman, and of the young grain to a young child, is to be sought the origin of the kindred Greek conception of the Corn-mother and the Corn-daughter, Demeter and Persephone. But if the timorous feminine soul of the rice can be frightened into a miscarriage even by loud noises, it is easy to imagine what her feelings must be at harvest, when people are under the sad necessity of cutting down the rice with the knife. At so critical a season every precaution must be used to render the necessary surgical operation of reaping as inconspicuous and as painless as possible. For that reason the reaping of the seed-rice is done with knives of a peculiar pattern, such that the blades are hidden in the reapers' hands and do not frighten the rice-spirit till the very last moment, when her head is swept off almost before she is aware; and from a like delicate motive the reapers at work in the fields employ a special form of speech, which the rice-spirit cannot be expected to understand, so that she has no warning or inkling of what is going forward till the heads of rice are safely deposited in the basket.

Among the Indonesian peoples who thus personify the rice we may take the Kayans or Bahaus of Central Borneo as typical. In order to secure and detain the volatile soul of the rice the Kayans resort to a number of devices. Among the instruments employed for this purpose are a miniature ladder, a spatula, and a basket containing hooks,

thorns, and cords. With the spatula the priestess strokes the soul of the rice down the little ladder into the basket, where it is naturally held fast by the hooks, the thorn, and the cord; and having thus captured and imprisoned the soul she conveys it into the rice-granary. Sometimes a bamboo box and a net are used for the same purpose. And in order to ensure a good harvest for the following year it is necessary not only to detain the soul of all the grains of rice which are safely stored in the granary, but also to attract and recover the soul of all the rice that has been lost through falling to the earth or being eaten by deer, apes, and pigs. For this purpose instruments of various sorts have been invented by the priests. One, for example, is a bamboo vessel provided with four hooks made from the wood of a fruit-tree, by means of which the absent rice-soul may be hooked and drawn back into the vessel, which is then hung up in the house. Sometimes two hands carved out of the wood of a fruit-tree are used for the same purpose. And every time that a Kayan housewife fetches rice from the granary for the use of her household, she must propitiate the souls of the rice in the granary, lest they should be angry at being robbed of their substance.

The same need of securing the soul of the rice, if the crop is to thrive, is keenly felt by the Karens of Burma. When a rice-field does not flourish, they suppose that the soul (*kelah*) of the rice is in some way detained from the rice. If the soul cannot be called back, the crop will fail. The following formula is used in recalling the *kelah* (soul) of the rice: "O come, rice-*kelah*, come! Come to the field. Come to the rice. With seed of each gender, come. Come from the river Kho, come from the river Kaw; from the place where they meet, come. Come from the West, come from the East. From the throat of the bird, from the maw of the ape, from the throat of the elephant. Come from the sources of rivers and their mouths. Come from the country of the Shan and Burman. From the distant kingdoms come. From all granaries come. O rice-*kelah*, come to the rice."

The Corn-mother of our European peasants has her match in the Rice-mother of the Minangkabauers of Sumatra. The Minangkabauers definitely attribute a soul to rice, and will sometimes assert that rice pounded in the usual way tastes better than rice ground in a mill, because in the mill the body of the rice was so bruised and battered that the soul has fled from it. Like the Javanese they think that the rice is under the special guardianship of a female spirit called Saning Sari, who is conceived as so closely knit up with the plant that the rice often goes by her name, as with the Romans the corn might be called Ceres. In particular Saning Sari is represented by certain stalks or grains called *indoea padi*, that is, literally, "Mother of Rice," a name that is often given to the guardian spirit herself. This so-called Mother of Rice is the occasion of a number of ceremonies observed at the planting and harvesting of the rice as well as during its preservation in the barn. When the seed of the rice is about to be sown in the nursery or bedding-out ground, where under the wet

system of cultivation it is regularly allowed to sprout before being transplanted to the fields, the best grains are picked out to form the Rice-mother. These are then sown in the middle of the bed, and the common seed is planted round about them. The state of the Rice-mother is supposed to exert the greatest influence on the growth of the rice; if she droops or pines away, the harvest will be bad in consequence. The woman who sows the Rice-mother in the nursery lets her hair hang loose and afterwards bathes, as a means of ensuring an abundant harvest. When the time comes to transplant the rice from the nursery to the field, the Rice-mother receives a special place either in the middle or in a corner of the field, and a prayer or charm is uttered as follows: "Saning Sari, may a measure of rice come from a stalk of rice and a basketful from a root; may you be frightened neither by lightning nor by passers-by! Sunshine make you glad; with the storm may you be at peace; and may rain serve to wash your face!" While the rice is growing, the particular plant which was thus treated as the Rice-mother is lost sight of; but before harvest another Rice-mother is found. When the crop is ripe for cutting, the oldest woman of the family or a sorcerer goes out to look for her. The first stalks seen to bend under a passing breeze are the Rice-mother, and they are tied together but not cut until the first-fruits of the field have been carried home to serve as a festal meal for the family and their friends, nay even for the domestic animals; since it is Saning Sari's pleasure that the beasts also should partake of her good gifts. After the meal has been eaten, the Rice-mother is fetched home by persons in gay attire, who carry her very carefully under an umbrella in a neatly worked bag to the barn, where a place in the middle is assigned to her. Every one believes that she takes care of the rice in the barn and even multiplies it not uncommonly.

When the Tomori of Central Celebes are about to plant the rice, they bury in the field some betel as an offering to the spirits who cause the rice to grow. The rice that is planted round this spot is the last to be reaped at harvest. At the commencement of the reaping the stalks of this patch of rice are tied together into a sheaf, which is called "the Mother of the Rice" (*ineno pae*), and offerings in the shape of rice, fowl's liver, eggs, and other things are laid down before it. When all the rest of the rice in the field has been reaped, "the Mother of the Rice" is cut down and carried with due honour to the rice-barn, where it is laid on the floor, and all the other sheaves are piled upon it. The Tomori, we are told, regard the Mother of the Rice as a special offering made to the rice-spirit Omonga, who dwells in the moon. If that spirit is not treated with proper respect, for example if the people who fetch rice from the barn are not decently clad, he is angry and punishes the offenders by eating up twice as much rice in the barn as they have taken out of it; some people have heard him smacking his lips in the barn, as he devoured the rice. On the other hand the Toradjas of Central Celebes, who also practice the custom of the Rice-mother at harvest, regard her as the actual mother

of the whole harvest, and therefore keep her carefully, lest in her absence the garnered store of rice should all melt away and disappear.

Again, just as in Scotland the old and the young spirit of the corn are represented as an Old Wife (*Cailleach*) and a Maiden respectively, so in the Malay Peninsula we find both the Rice-mother and her child represented by different sheaves or bundles of ears on the harvest-field. The ceremony of cutting and bringing home the Soul of the Rice was witnessed by Mr. W. W. Skeat at Chodoi in Selangor on the twenty-eighth of January 1897. The particular bunch or sheaf which was to serve as the Mother of the Rice-soul had previously been sought and identified by means of the markings or shape of the ears. From this sheaf an aged sorceress, with much solemnity, cut a little bundle of seven ears, anointed them with oil, tied them round with parti-coloured thread, fumigated them with incense, and having wrapt them in a white cloth deposited them in a little oval-shaped basket. These seven ears were the infant Soul of the Rice and the little basket was its cradle. It was carried home to the farmer's house by another woman, who held up an umbrella to screen the tender infant from the hot rays of the sun. Arrived at the house the Rice-child was welcomed by the women of the family, and laid, cradle and all, on a new sleeping-mat with pillows at the head. After that the farmer's wife was instructed to observe certain rules of taboo for three days, the rules being in many respects identical with those which have to be observed for three days after the birth of a real child. Something of the same tender care which is thus bestowed on the newly-born Rice-child is naturally extended also to its parent, the sheaf from whose body it was taken. This sheaf, which remains standing in the field after the Rice-soul has been carried home and put to bed, is treated as a newly-made mother; that is to say, young shoots of trees are pounded together and scattered broadcast every evening for three successive days, and when the three days are up you take the pulp of a coco-nut and what are called "goat-flowers," mix them up, eat them with a little sugar, and spit some of the mixture out among the rice. So after a real birth the young shoots of the jack-fruit, the rose-apple, certain kinds of banana, and the thin pulp of young coco-nuts are mixed with dried fish, salt, acid, prawn-condiment, and the like dainties to form a sort of salad, which is administered to mother and child for three successive days. The last sheaf is reaped by the farmer's wife, who carries it back to the house, where it is threshed and mixed with the Rice-soul. The farmer then takes the Rice-soul and its basket and deposits it, together with the product of the last sheaf, in the big circular rice-bin used by the Malays. Some grains from the Rice-soul are mixed with the seed which is to be sown in the following year. In this Rice-mother and Rice-child of the Malay Peninsula we may see the counterpart and in a sense the prototype of the Demeter and Persephone of ancient Greece.

Once more, the European custom of representing the corn-spirit

in the double form of bride and bridegroom has its parallel in a ceremony observed at the rice-harvest in Java. Before the reapers begin to cut the rice, the priest or sorcerer picks out a number of ears of rice, which are tied together, smeared with ointment, and adorned with flowers. Thus decked out, the ears are called the *padi-pĕngantèn*, that is, the Rice-bride and the Rice-bridegroom; their wedding feast is celebrated, and the cutting of the rice begins immediately afterwards. Later on, when the rice is being got in, a bridal chamber is partitioned off in the barn, and furnished with a new mat, a lamp, and all kinds of toilet articles. Sheaves of rice, to represent the wedding guests, are placed beside the Rice-bride and the Rice-bridegroom. Not till this has been done may the whole harvest be housed in the barn. And for the first forty days after the rice has been housed, no one may enter the barn, for fear of disturbing the newly-wedded pair.

In the islands of Bali and Lombok, when the time of harvest has come, the owner of the field himself makes a beginning by cutting "the principal rice" with his own hands and binding it into two sheaves, each composed of one hundred and eight stalks with their leaves attached to them. One of the sheaves represents a man and the other a woman, and they are called "husband and wife." The male sheaf is wound about with thread so that none of the leaves are visible, whereas the female sheaf has its leaves bent over and tied so as to resemble the roll of a woman's hair. Sometimes, for further distinction, a necklace of rice-straw is tied round the female sheaf. When the rice is brought home from the field, the two sheaves representing the husband and wife are carried by a woman on her head, and are the last of all to be deposited in the barn. There they are laid to rest on a small erection or on a cushion of rice-straw. The whole arrangement, we are informed, has for its object to induce the rice to increase and multiply in the granary, so that the owner may get more out of it than he put in. Hence when the people of Bali bring the two sheaves, the husband and wife, into the barn, they say, "Increase ye and multiply without ceasing." When all the rice in the barn has been used up, the two sheaves representing the husband and wife remain in the empty building till they have gradually disappeared or been devoured by mice. The pinch of hunger sometimes drives individuals to eat up the rice of these two sheaves, but the wretches who do so are viewed with disgust by their fellows and branded as pigs and dogs. Nobody would ever sell these holy sheaves with the rest of their profane brethren.

The same notion of the propagation of the rice by a male and female power finds expression amongst the Szis of Upper Burma. When the paddy, that is, the rice with the husks still on it, has been dried and piled in a heap for threshing, all the friends of the household are invited to the threshing-floor, and food and drink are brought out. The heap of paddy is divided and one half spread out for threshing, while the other half is left piled up. On the pile food and spirits are

set, and one of the elders, addressing "the father and mother of the paddy-plant," prays for plenteous harvests in future, and begs that the seed may bear many fold. Then the whole party eat, drink, and make merry. This ceremony at the threshing-floor is the only occasion when these people invoke "the father and mother of the paddy."

§ 3. *The Spirit of the Corn embodied in Human Beings.*—Thus the theory which recognises in the European Corn-mother, Corn-maiden, and so forth, the embodiment in vegetable form of the animating spirit of the crops is amply confirmed by the evidence of peoples in other parts of the world, who, because they have lagged behind the European races in mental development, retain for that very reason a keener sense of the original motives for observing those rustic rites which among ourselves have sunk to the level of meaningless survivals. The reader may, however, remember that according to Mannhardt, whose theory I am expounding, the spirit of the corn manifests itself not merely in vegetable but also in human form; the person who cuts the last sheaf or gives the last stroke at threshing passes for a temporary embodiment of the corn-spirit, just as much as the bunch of corn which he reaps or threshes. Now in the parallels which have been hitherto adduced from the customs of peoples outside Europe the spirit of the crops appears only in vegetable form. It remains, therefore, to prove that other races besides our European peasantry have conceived the spirit of the crops as incorporate in or represented by living men and women. Such a proof, I may remind the reader, is germane to the theme of this book; for the more instances we discover of human beings representing in themselves the life or animating spirit of plants, the less difficulty will be felt at classing amongst them the King of the Wood at Nemi.

The Mandans and Minnitarees of North America used to hold a festival in spring which they called the corn-medicine festival of the women. They thought that a certain Old Woman who Never Dies made the crops to grow, and that, living somewhere in the south, she sent the migratory waterfowl in spring as her tokens and representatives. Each sort of bird represented a special kind of crop cultivated by the Indians: the wild goose stood for the maize, the wild swan for the gourds, and the wild duck for the beans. So when the feathered messengers of the Old Woman began to arrive in spring the Indians celebrated the corn-medicine festival of the women. Scaffolds were set up, on which the people hung dried meat and other things by way of offerings to the Old Woman; and on a certain day the old women of the tribe, as representatives of the Old Woman who Never Dies, assembled at the scaffolds each bearing in her hand an ear of maize fastened to a stick. They first planted these sticks in the ground, then danced round the scaffolds, and finally took up the sticks again in their arms. Meanwhile old men beat drums and shook rattles as a musical accompaniment to the performance of the old women. Further, young women came and put dried flesh into the mouths of the old women, for which they received in return a grain of the consecrated

maize to eat. Three or four grains of the holy corn were also placed in the dishes of the young women, to be afterwards carefully mixed with the seed-corn, which they were supposed to fertilise. The dried flesh hung on the scaffold belonged to the old women, because they represented the Old Woman who Never Dies. A similar corn-medicine festival was held in autumn for the purpose of attracting the herds of buffaloes and securing a supply of meat. At that time every woman carried in her arms an uprooted plant of maize. They gave the name of the Old Woman who Never Dies both to the maize and to those birds which they regarded as symbols of the fruits of the earth, and they prayed to them in autumn saying, "Mother, have pity on us! send us not the bitter cold too soon, lest we have not meat enough! let not all the game depart, that we may have something for the winter!" In autumn, when the birds were flying south, the Indians thought that they were going home to the Old Woman and taking to her the offerings that had been hung up on the scaffolds, especially the dried meat, which she ate. Here then we have the spirit or divinity of the corn conceived as an Old Woman and represented in bodily form by old women, who in their capacity of representatives receive some at least of the offerings which are intended for her.

In some parts of India the harvest-goddess Gauri is represented at once by an unmarried girl and by a bundle of wild balsam plants, which is made up into the figure of a woman and dressed as such with mask, garments, and ornaments. Both the human and the vegetable representative of the goddess are worshipped, and the intention of the whole ceremony appears to be to ensure a good crop of rice.

§ 4. *The Double Personification of the Corn as Mother and Daughter.*—Compared with the Corn-mother of Germany and the Harvest-maiden of Scotland, the Demeter and Persephone of Greece are late products of religious growth. Yet as members of the Aryan family the Greeks must at one time or another have observed harvest customs like those which are still practised by Celts, Teutons, and Slavs, and which, far beyond the limits of the Aryan world, have been practised by the Indians of Peru and many peoples of the East Indies—a sufficient proof that the ideas on which these customs rest are not confined to any one race, but naturally suggest themselves to all untutored peoples engaged in agriculture. It is probable, therefore, that Demeter and Persephone, those stately and beautiful figures of Greek mythology, grew out of the same simple beliefs and practices which still prevail among our modern peasantry, and that they were represented by rude dolls made out of the yellow sheaves on many a harvest-field long before their breathing images were wrought in bronze and marble by the master hands of Phidias and Praxiteles. A reminiscence of that olden time—a scent, so to say, of the harvest-field—lingered to the last in the title of the Maiden (*Kore*) by which Persephone was commonly known. Thus if the prototype of Demeter is the Corn-mother of Germany, the prototype of Persephone is the Harvest-maiden, which, autumn after autumn, is still made from the last sheaf on the Braes

of Balquhidder. Indeed, if we knew more about the peasant-farmers of ancient Greece, we should probably find that even in classical times they continued annually to fashion their Corn-mothers (Demeters) and Maidens (Persephones) out of the ripe corn on the harvest-fields. But unfortunately the Demeter and Persephone whom we know were the denizens of towns, the majestic inhabitants of lordly temples; it was for such divinities alone that the refined writers of antiquity had eyes; the uncouth rites performed by rustics amongst the corn were beneath their notice. Even if they noticed them, they probably never dreamed of any connexion between the puppet of corn-stalks on the sunny stubble-field and the marble divinity in the shady coolness of the temple. Still the writings even of these town-bred and cultured persons afford us an occasional glimpse of a Demeter as rude as the rudest that a remote German village can show. Thus the story that Iasion begat a child Plutus ("wealth," "abundance") by Demeter on a thrice-ploughed field, may be compared with the West Prussian custom of the mock birth of a child on the harvest-field. In this Prussian custom the pretended mother represents the Corn-mother (*Žytniamatka*); the pretended child represents the Corn-baby, and the whole ceremony is a charm to ensure a crop next year. The custom and the legend alike point to an older practice of performing, among the sprouting crops in spring or the stubble in autumn, one of those real or mimic acts of procreation by which, as we have seen, primitive man often seeks to infuse his own vigorous life into the languid or decaying energies of nature. Another glimpse of the savage under the civilised Demeter will be afforded farther on, when we come to deal with another aspect of those agricultural divinities.

The reader may have observed that in modern folk-customs the corn-spirit is generally represented either by a Corn-mother (Old Woman, etc.) or by a Maiden (Harvest-child, etc.), not both by a Corn-mother and by a Maiden. Why then did the Greeks represent the corn both as a mother and a daughter?

In the Breton custom the mother-sheaf—a large figure made out of the last sheaf with a small corn-doll inside of it—clearly represents both the Corn-mother and the Corn-daughter, the latter still unborn. Again, in the Prussian custom just referred to, the woman who plays the part of Corn-mother represents the ripe grain; the child appears to represent next year's corn, which may be regarded, naturally enough, as the child of this year's corn, since it is from the seed of this year's harvest that next year's crop will spring. Further, we have seen that among the Malays of the Peninsula and sometimes among the Highlanders of Scotland the spirit of the grain is represented in double female form, both as old and young, by means of ears taken alike from the ripe crop: in Scotland the old spirit of the corn appears as the Carline or *Cailleach*, the young spirit as the Maiden; while among the Malays of the Peninsula the two spirits of the rice are definitely related to each other as mother and child. Judged by these analogies Demeter would be the ripe crop of this year; Persephone would be

the seed-corn taken from it and sown in autumn, to reappear in spring. The descent of Persephone into the lower world would thus be a mythical expression for the sowing of the seed; her reappearance in spring would signify the sprouting of the young corn. In this way the Persephone of one year becomes the Demeter of the next, and this may very well have been the original form of the myth. But when with the advance of religious thought the corn came to be personified no longer as a being that went through the whole cycle of birth, growth, reproduction, and death within a year, but as an immortal goddess, consistency required that one of the two personifications, the mother or the daughter, should be sacrificed. However, the double conception of the corn as mother and daughter may have been too old and too deeply rooted in the popular mind to be eradicated by logic, and so room had to be found in the reformed myth both for mother and daughter. This was done by assigning to Persephone the character of the corn sown in autumn and sprouting in spring, while Demeter was left to play the somewhat vague part of the heavy mother of the corn, who laments its annual disappearance underground, and rejoices over its reappearance in spring. Thus instead of a regular succession of divine beings, each living a year and then giving birth to her successor, the reformed myth exhibits the conception of two divine and immortal beings, one of whom annually disappears into and reappears from the ground, while the other has little to do but to weep and rejoice at the appropriate seasons.

This theory of the double personification of the corn in Greek myth assumes that both personifications (Demeter and Persephone) are original. But if we suppose that the Greek myth started with a single personification, the aftergrowth of a second personification may perhaps be explained as follows. On looking over the harvest customs which have been passed under review, it may be noticed that they involve two distinct conceptions of the corn-spirit. For whereas in some of the customs the corn-spirit is treated as immanent in the corn, in others it is regarded as external to it. Thus when a particular sheaf is called by the name of the corn-spirit, and is dressed in clothes and handled with reverence, the spirit is clearly regarded as immanent in the corn. But when the spirit is said to make the crops grow by passing through them, or to blight the grain of those against whom she has a grudge, she is apparently conceived as distinct from, though exercising power over, the corn. Conceived in the latter mode the corn-spirit is in a fair way to become a deity of the corn, if she has not become so already. Of these two conceptions, that of the corn-spirit as immanent in the corn is doubtless the older, since the view of nature as animated by indwelling spirits appears to have generally preceded the view of it as controlled by external deities; to put it shortly, animism precedes deism. In the harvest customs of our European peasantry the corn-spirit seems to be conceived now as immanent in the corn and now as external to it. In Greek mythology, on the other hand, Demeter is viewed rather as the deity of the corn

than as the spirit immanent in it. The process of thought which leads to the change from the one mode of conception to the other is anthropomorphism, or the gradual investment of the immanent spirits with more and more of the attributes of humanity. As men emerge from savagery the tendency to humanise their divinities gains strength; and the more human these become the wider is the breach which severs them from the natural objects of which they were at first merely the animating spirits or souls. But in the progress upwards from savagery men of the same generation do not march abreast; and though the new anthropomorphic gods may satisfy the religious wants of the more developed intelligences, the backward members of the community will cling by preference to the old animistic notions. Now when the spirit of any natural object such as the corn has been invested with human qualities, detached from the object, and converted into a deity controlling it, the object itself is, by the withdrawal of its spirit, left inanimate; it becomes, so to say, a spiritual vacuum. But the popular fancy, intolerant of such a vacuum, in other words, unable to conceive anything as inanimate, immediately creates a fresh mythical being, with which it peoples the vacant object. Thus the same natural object comes to be represented in mythology by two distinct beings: first by the old spirit now separated from it and raised to the rank of a deity; second, by the new spirit, freshly created by the popular fancy to supply the place vacated by the old spirit on its elevation to a higher sphere. In such cases the problem for mythology is, having got two distinct personifications of the same object, what to do with them? How are their relations to each other to be adjusted, and room found for both in the mythological system? When the old spirit or new deity is conceived as creating or producing the object in question, the problem is easily solved. Since the object is believed to be produced by the old spirit, and animated by the new one, the latter, as the soul of the object, must also owe its existence to the former; thus the old spirit will stand to the new one as producer to produced, that is, in mythology, as parent to child, and if both spirits are conceived as female, their relation will be that of mother and daughter. In this way, starting from a single personification of the corn as female, mythic fancy might in time reach a double personification of it as mother and daughter. It would be very rash to affirm that this was the way in which the myth of Demeter and Persephone actually took shape; but it seems a legitimate conjecture that the reduplication of deities, of which Demeter and Persephone furnish an example, may sometimes have arisen in the way indicated. For example, among the pairs of deities dealt with in a former part of this work, it has been shown that there are grounds for regarding both Isis and her companion god Osiris as personifications of the corn. On the hypothesis just suggested, Isis would be the old corn-spirit, and Osiris would be the newer one, whose relationship to the old spirit was variously explained as that of brother, husband, and son; for of course mythology would always be free to account for the coexistence

of the two divinities in more ways than one. It must not, however, be forgotten that this proposed explanation of such pairs of deities as Demeter and Persephone or Isis and Osiris is purely conjectural, and is only given for what it is worth.

CHAPTER XLVII

LITYERSES

§ 1. *Songs of the Corn Reapers.*—In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to show that in the Corn-mother and Harvest-maiden of Northern Europe we have the prototypes of Demeter and Persephone. But an essential feature is still wanting to complete the resemblance. A leading incident in the Greek myth is the death and resurrection of Persephone; it is this incident which, coupled with the nature of the goddess as a deity of vegetation, links the myth with the cults of Adonis, Attis, Osiris, and Dionysus; and it is in virtue of this incident that the myth finds a place in our discussion of the Dying God. It remains, therefore, to see whether the conception of the annual death and resurrection of a god, which figures so prominently in these great Greek and Oriental worships, has not also its origin or its analogy in the rustic rites observed by reapers and vine-dressers amongst the corn-shocks and the vines.

Our general ignorance of the popular superstitions and customs of the ancients has already been confessed. But the obscurity which thus hangs over the first beginnings of ancient religion is fortunately dissipated to some extent in the present case. The worships of Osiris, Adonis, and Attis had their respective seats, as we have seen, in Egypt, Syria, and Phrygia; and in each of these countries certain harvest and vintage customs are known to have been observed, the resemblance of which to each other and to the national rites struck the ancients themselves, and, compared with the harvest customs of modern peasants and barbarians, seems to throw some light on the origin of the rites in question.

It has been already mentioned, on the authority of Diodorus, that in ancient Egypt the reapers were wont to lament over the first sheaf cut, invoking Isis as the goddess to whom they owed the discovery of corn. To the plaintive song or cry sung or uttered by Egyptian reapers the Greeks gave the name of Maneros, and explained the name by a story that Maneros, the only son of the first Egyptian king, invented agriculture, and, dying an untimely death, was thus lamented by the people. It appears, however, that the name Maneros is due to a misunderstanding of the formula *maa-ne-hra*, "Come to the house," which has been discovered in various Egyptian writings, for example in the dirge of Isis in the Book of the Dead. Hence we may suppose that the cry *maa-ne-hra* was chanted by the reapers

over the cut corn as a dirge for the death of the corn-spirit (Isis or Osiris) and a prayer for its return. As the cry was raised over the first ears reaped, it would seem that the corn-spirit was believed by the Egyptians to be present in the first corn cut and to die under the sickle. We have seen that in the Malay Peninsula and Java the first ears of rice are taken to represent either the Soul of the Rice or the Rice-bride and the Rice-bridegroom. In parts of Russia the first sheaf is treated much in the same way that the last sheaf is treated elsewhere. It is reaped by the mistress herself, taken home and set in the place of honour near the holy pictures; afterwards it is threshed separately, and some of its grain is mixed with the next year's seed-corn. In Aberdeenshire, while the last corn cut was generally used to make the *clyack* sheaf, it was sometimes, though rarely, the first corn cut that was dressed up as a woman and carried home with ceremony.

In Phoenicia and Western Asia a plaintive song, like that chanted by the Egyptian corn-reapers, was sung at the vintage and probably (to judge by analogy) also at harvest. This Phoenician song was called by the Greeks Linus or Ailinus and explained, like Maneros, as a lament for the death of a youth named Linus. According to one story Linus was brought up by a shepherd, but torn to pieces by his dogs. But, like Maneros, the name Linus or Ailinus appears to have originated in a verbal misunderstanding, and to be nothing more than the cry *ai lanu*, that is "Woe to us," which the Phoenicians probably uttered in mourning for Adonis; at least Sappho seems to have regarded Adonis and Linus as equivalent.

In Bithynia a like mournful ditty, called Bormus or Borimus, was chanted by Mariandynian reapers. Bormus was said to have been a handsome youth, the son of King Upias or of a wealthy and distinguished man. One summer day, watching the reapers at work in his fields, he went to fetch them a drink of water and was never heard of more. So the reapers sought for him, calling him in plaintive strains, which they continued to chant at harvest ever afterwards.

§ 2. *Killing the Corn-spirit.*—In Phrygia the corresponding song, sung by harvesters both at reaping and at threshing, was called Lityerses. According to one story, Lityerses was a bastard son of Midas, King of Phrygia, and dwelt at Celaenae. He used to reap the corn, and had an enormous appetite. When a stranger happened to enter the corn-field or to pass by it, Lityerses gave him plenty to eat and drink, then took him to the corn-fields on the banks of the Maeander and compelled him to reap along with him. Lastly, it was his custom to wrap the stranger in a sheaf, cut off his head with a sickle, and carry away his body, swathed in the corn-stalks. But at last Hercules undertook to reap with him, cut off his head with the sickle, and threw his body into the river. As Hercules is reported to have slain Lityerses in the same way that Lityerses slew others, we may infer that Lityerses used to throw the bodies of his victims

into the river. According to another version of the story, Lityerses, a son of Midas, was wont to challenge people to a reaping match with him, and if he vanquished them he used to thrash them; but one day he met with a stronger reaper, who slew him.

There are some grounds for supposing that in these stories of Lityerses we have the description of a Phrygian harvest custom in accordance with which certain persons, especially strangers passing the harvest field, were regularly regarded as embodiments of the corn-spirit, and as such were seized by the reapers, wrapt in sheaves, and beheaded, their bodies, bound up in the corn-stalks, being afterwards thrown into water as a rain-charm. The grounds for this supposition are, first, the resemblance of the Lityerses story to the harvest customs of European peasantry, and, second, the frequency of human sacrifices offered by savage races to promote the fertility of the fields. We will examine these grounds successively, beginning with the former.

In comparing the story with the harvest customs of Europe, three points deserve special attention, namely: I. the reaping match and the binding of persons in the sheaves; II. the killing of the corn-spirit or his representatives; III. the treatment of visitors to the harvest field or of strangers passing it.

I. In regard to the first head, we have seen that in modern Europe the person who cuts or binds or threshes the last sheaf is often exposed to rough treatment at the hands of his fellow-labourers. For example, he is bound up in the last sheaf, and, thus encased, is carried or carted about, beaten, drenched with water, thrown on a dunghill, and so forth. Or, if he is spared this horse-play, he is at least the subject of ridicule or is thought to be destined to suffer some misfortune in the course of the year. Hence the harvesters are naturally reluctant to give the last cut at reaping or the last stroke at threshing or to bind the last sheaf, and towards the close of the work this reluctance produces an emulation among the labourers, each striving to finish his task as fast as possible, in order that he may escape the invidious distinction of being last. For example, in the Mittelmark district of Prussia, when the rye has been reaped, and the last sheaves are about to be tied up, the binders stand in two rows facing each other, every woman with her sheaf and her straw rope before her. At a given signal they all tie up their sheaves, and the one who is the last to finish is ridiculed by the rest. Not only so, but her sheaf is made up into human shape and called the Old Man, and she must carry it home to the farmyard, where the harvesters dance in a circle round her and it. Then they take the Old Man to the farmer and deliver it to him with the words, "We bring the Old Man to the Master. He may keep him till he gets a new one." After that the Old Man is set up against a tree, where he remains for a long time, the butt of many jests. At Aschbach in Bavaria, when the reaping is nearly finished, the reapers say, "Now, we will drive out the Old Man." Each of them sets himself to reap a patch of corn as fast as he can;

he who cuts the last handful or the last stalk is greeted by the rest with an exulting cry, "You have the Old Man." Sometimes a black mask is fastened on the reaper's face and he is dressed in woman's clothes; or if the reaper is a woman, she is dressed in man's clothes. A dance follows. At the supper the Old Man gets twice as large a portion of the food as the others. The proceedings are similar at threshing; the person who gives the last stroke is said to have the Old Man. At the supper given to the threshers he has to eat out of the cream-ladle and to drink a great deal. Moreover, he is quizzed and teased in all sorts of ways till he frees himself from further annoyance by treating the others to brandy or beer.

These examples illustrate the contests in reaping, threshing, and binding which take place amongst the harvesters, from their unwillingness to suffer the ridicule and discomfort incurred by the one who happens to finish his work last. It will be remembered that the person who is last at reaping, binding, or threshing, is regarded as the representative of the corn-spirit, and this idea is more fully expressed by binding him or her in corn-stalks. The latter custom has been already illustrated, but a few more instances may be added. At Kloxin, near Stettin, the harvesters call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "You have the Old Man, and must keep him." As late as the first half of the nineteenth century the custom was to tie up the woman herself in pease-straw, and bring her with music to the farmhouse, where the harvesters danced with her till the pease-straw fell off. In other villages round Stettin, when the last harvest-waggon is being loaded, there is a regular race amongst the women, each striving not to be last. For she who places the last sheaf on the waggon is called the Old Man, and is completely swathed in corn-stalks; she is also decked with flowers, and flowers and a helmet of straw are placed on her head. In solemn procession she carries the harvest-crown to the squire, over whose head she holds it while she utters a string of good wishes. At the dance which follows, the Old Man has the right to choose his, or rather her, partner; it is an honour to dance with him. At Gommern, near Magdeburg, the reaper who cuts the last ears of corn is often wrapt up in corn-stalks so completely that it is hard to see whether there is a man in the bundle or not. Thus wrapt up he is taken by another stalwart reaper on his back, and carried round the field amidst the joyous cries of the harvesters. At Neuhausen, near Merseburg, the person who binds the last sheaf is wrapt in ears of oats and saluted as the Oatsman, whereupon the others dance round him. At Brie, Isle de France, the farmer himself is tied up in the *first* sheaf. At Dingelstedt, in the district of Erfurt, down to the first half of the nineteenth century it was the custom to tie up a man in the last sheaf. He was called the Old Man, and was brought home on the last waggon, amid huzzas and music. On reaching the farmyard he was rolled round the barn and drenched with water. At Nördlingen in Bavaria the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is wrapt in straw and rolled on the

threshing-floor. In some parts of Oberpfalz, Bavaria, he is said to "get the Old Man," is wrapt in straw, and carried to a neighbour who has not yet finished his threshing. In Silesia the woman who binds the last sheaf has to submit to a good deal of horse-play. She is pushed, knocked down, and tied up in the sheaf, after which she is called the corn-puppet (*Kornpopel*).

"In all these cases the idea is that the spirit of the corn—the Old Man of vegetation—is driven out of the corn last cut or last threshed, and lives in the barn during the winter. At sowing-time he goes out again to the fields to resume his activity as animating force among the sprouting corn."

II. Passing to the second point of comparison between the Lityerses story and European harvest customs, we have now to see that in the latter the corn-spirit is often believed to be killed at reaping or threshing. In the Romsdal and other parts of Norway, when the haymaking is over, the people say that "the Old Hay-man has been killed." In some parts of Bavaria the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is said to have killed the Corn-man, the Oats-man, or the Wheat-man, according to the crop. In the Canton of Tillot, in Lorraine, at threshing the last corn the men keep time with their flails, calling out as they thresh, "We are killing the Old Woman! We are killing the Old Woman!" If there is an old woman in the house she is warned to save herself, or she will be struck dead. Near Ragnit, in Lithuania, the last handful of corn is left standing by itself, with the words, "The Old Woman (*Boba*) is sitting in there." Then a young reaper whets his scythe and, with a strong sweep, cuts down the handful. It is now said of him that "he has cut off the Boba's head"; and he receives a gratuity from the farmer and a jugful of water over his head from the farmer's wife. According to another account, every Lithuanian reaper makes haste to finish his task; for the Old Rye-woman lives in the last stalks, and whoever cuts the last stalks kills the Old Rye-woman, and by killing her he brings trouble on himself. In Wilkischken, in the district of Tilsit, the man who cuts the last corn goes by the name of "the killer of the Rye-woman." In Lithuania, again, the corn-spirit is believed to be killed at threshing as well as at reaping. When only a single pile of corn remains to be threshed, all the threshers suddenly step back a few paces, as if at the word of command. Then they fall to work, plying their flails with the utmost rapidity and vehemence, till they come to the last bundle. Upon this they fling themselves with almost frantic fury, straining every nerve, and raining blows on it till the word "Halt!" rings out sharply from the leader. The man whose flail is the last to fall after the command to stop has been given is immediately surrounded by all the rest, crying out that "he has struck the Old Rye-woman dead." He has to expiate the deed by treating them to brandy; and, like the man who cuts the last corn, he is known as "the killer of the Old Rye-woman." Sometimes in Lithuania the slain corn-spirit was represented by a puppet. Thus a female figure was made out of

corn-stalks, dressed in clothes, and placed on the threshing-floor, under the heap of corn which was to be threshed last. Whoever thereafter gave the last stroke at threshing "struck the Old Woman dead." We have already met with examples of burning the figure which represents the corn-spirit. In the East Riding of Yorkshire a custom called "burning the Old Witch" is observed on the last day of harvest. A small sheaf of corn is burnt on the field in a fire of stubble; peas are parched at the fire and eaten with a liberal allowance of ale; and the lads and lasses romp about the flames and amuse themselves by blackening each other's faces. Sometimes, again, the corn-spirit is represented by a man, who lies down under the last corn; it is threshed upon his body, and the people say that "the Old Man is being beaten to death." We saw that sometimes the farmer's wife is thrust, together with the last sheaf, under the threshing-machine, as if to thresh her, and that afterwards a pretence is made of winnowing her. At Volders, in the Tyrol, husks of corn are stuck behind the neck of the man who gives the last stroke at threshing, and he is throttled with a straw garland. If he is tall, it is believed that the corn will be tall next year. Then he is tied on a bundle and flung into the river. In Carinthia, the thresher who gave the last stroke, and the person who untied the last sheaf on the threshing-floor, are bound hand and foot with straw bands, and crowns of straw are placed on their heads. Then they are tied, face to face, on a sledge, dragged through the village, and flung into a brook. The custom of throwing the representative of the corn-spirit into a stream, like that of drenching him with water, is, as usual, a rain-charm.

III. Thus far the representatives of the corn-spirit have generally been the man or woman who cuts, binds, or threshes the last corn. We now come to the cases in which the corn-spirit is represented either by a stranger passing the harvest-field (as in the Lityerses tale), or by a visitor entering it for the first time. All over Germany it is customary for the reapers or threshers to lay hold of passing strangers and bind them with a rope made of corn-stalks, till they pay a forfeit; and when the farmer himself or one of his guests enters the field or the threshing-floor for the first time, he is treated in the same way. Sometimes the rope is only tied round his arm or his feet or his neck. But sometimes he is regularly swathed in corn. Thus at Solör in Norway, whoever enters the field, be he the master or a stranger, is tied up in a sheaf and must pay a ransom. In the neighbourhood of Soest, when the farmer visits the flax-pullers for the first time, he is completely enveloped in flax. Passers-by are also surrounded by the women, tied up in flax, and compelled to stand brandy. At Nördlingen strangers are caught with straw ropes and tied up in a sheaf till they pay a forfeit. Among the Germans of Haselberg, in West Bohemia, as soon as a farmer had given the last corn to be threshed on the threshing-floor, he was swathed in it and had to redeem himself by a present of cakes. In the canton of Putanges, in Normandy, a pretence of tying up the owner of the land

in the last sheaf of wheat is still practised, or at least was still practised some quarter of a century ago. The task falls to the women alone. They throw themselves on the proprietor, seize him by the arms, the legs, and the body, throw him to the ground, and stretch him on the last sheaf. Then a show is made of binding him, and the conditions to be observed at the harvest-supper are dictated to him. When he has accepted them, he is released and allowed to get up. At Brie, Isle de France, when any one who does not belong to the farm passes by the harvest-field, the reapers give chase. If they catch him, they bind him in a sheaf an dbite him, one after the other, in the forehead, crying, "You shall carry the key of the field." "To have the key" is an expression used by harvesters elsewhere in the sense of to cut or bind or thresh the last sheaf; hence, it is equivalent to the phrases "You have the Old Man," "You are the Old Man," which are addressed to the cutter, binder, or thresher of the last sheaf. Therefore, when a stranger, as at Brie, is tied up in a sheaf and told that he will "carry the key of the field," it is as much as to say that he is the Old Man, that is, an embodiment of the corn-spirit. In hop-picking, if a well-dressed stranger passes the hop-yard, he is seized by the women, tumbled into the bin, covered with leaves, and not released till he has paid a fine.

Thus, like the ancient Lityerses, modern European reapers have been wont to lay hold of a passing stranger and tie him up in a sheaf. It is not to be expected that they should complete the parallel by cutting off his head; but if they do not take such a strong step, their language and gestures are at least indicative of a desire to do so. For instance, in Mecklenburg on the first day of reaping, if the master or mistress or a stranger enters the field, or merely passes by it, all the mowers face towards him and sharpen their scythes, clashing their whet-stones against them in unison, as if they were making ready to mow. Then the woman who leads the mowers steps up to him and ties a band round his left arm. He must ransom himself by payment of a forfeit. Near Ratzeburg, when the master or other person of mark enters the field or passes by it, all the harvesters stop work and march towards him in a body, the men with their scythes in front. On meeting him they form up in line, men and women. The men stick the poles of their scythes in the ground, as they do in whetting them; then they take off their caps and hang them on the scythes, while their leader stands forward and makes a speech. When he has done, they all whet their scythes in measured time very loudly, after which they put on their caps. Two of the women binders then come forward; one of them ties the master or stranger (as the case may be) with corn-ears or with a silken band; the other delivers a rhyming address. The following are specimens of the speeches made by the reaper on these occasions. In some parts of Pomerania every passer-by is stopped, his way being barred with a corn-rope. The reapers form a circle round him and sharpen their scythes, while their leader says:

"The men are ready,
The scythes are bent,
The corn is great and small,
The gentleman must be mowed."

Then the process of whetting the scythes is repeated. At Ramin, in the district of Stettin, the stranger, standing encircled by the reapers, is thus addressed:

"We'll stroke the gentleman
With our naked sword,
Wherewith we shear meadows and fields.
We shear princes and lords.
Labourers are often athirst;
If the gentleman will stand beer and brandy
The joke will soon be over.
But, if our prayer he does not like,
The sword has a right to strike."

On the threshing-floor strangers are also regarded as embodiments of the corn-spirit, and are treated accordingly. At Wiedingharde in Schleswig when a stranger comes to the threshing-floor he is asked, "Shall I teach you the flail-dance?" If he says yes, they put the arms of the threshing-flail round his neck as if he were a sheaf of corn, and press them together so tight that he is nearly choked. In some parishes of Wermland (Sweden), when a stranger enters the threshing-floor where the threshers are at work, they say that "they will teach him the threshing-song." Then they put a flail round his neck and a straw rope about his body. Also, as we have seen, if a stranger woman enters the threshing-floor, the threshers put a flail round her body and a wreath of corn-stalks round her neck, and call out, "See the Corn-woman! See! that is how the Corn-maiden looks!"

Thus in these harvest-customs of modern Europe the person who cuts, binds, or threshes the last corn is treated as an embodiment of the corn-spirit by being wrapt up in sheaves, killed in mimicry by agricultural implements, and thrown into the water. These coincidences with the Lityerses story seem to prove that the latter is a genuine description of an old Phrygian harvest-custom. But since in the modern parallels the killing of the personal representative of the corn-spirit is necessarily omitted or at most enacted only in mimicry, it is desirable to show that in rude society human beings have been commonly killed as an agricultural ceremony to promote the fertility of the fields. The following examples will make this plain.

§ 3. *Human Sacrifices for the Crops.*—The Indians of Guayaquil, in Ecuador, used to sacrifice human blood and the hearts of men when they sowed their fields. The people of Cañar (now Cuenca in Ecuador) used to sacrifice a hundred children annually at harvest. The kings of Quito, the Incas of Peru, and for a long time the Spaniards were unable to suppress the bloody rite. At a Mexican harvest-festival, when the first-fruits of the season were offered to the sun, a criminal was placed between two immense stones, balanced opposite each other, and was crushed by them as they fell together. His remains were buried, and a feast and dance followed. This sacrifice was known

as "the meeting of the stones." We have seen that the ancient Mexicans also sacrificed human beings at all the various stages in the growth of the maize, the age of the victims corresponding to the age of the corn; for they sacrificed new-born babes at sowing, older children when the grain had sprouted, and so on till it was fully ripe, when they sacrificed old men. No doubt the correspondence between the ages of the victims and the state of the corn was supposed to enhance the efficacy of the sacrifice.

The Pawnees annually sacrificed a human victim in spring when they sowed their fields. The sacrifice was believed to have been enjoined on them by the Morning Star, or by a certain bird which the Morning Star had sent to them as its messenger. The bird was stuffed and preserved as a powerful talisman. They thought that an omission of this sacrifice would be followed by the total failure of the crops of maize, beans, and pumpkins. The victim was a captive of either sex. He was clad in the gayest and most costly attire, was fattened on the choicest food, and carefully kept in ignorance of his doom. When he was fat enough, they bound him to a cross in the presence of the multitude, danced a solemn dance, then cleft his head with a tomahawk and shot him with arrows. According to one trader, the squaws then cut pieces of flesh from the victim's body, with which they greased their hoes; but this was denied by another trader who had been present at the ceremony. Immediately after the sacrifice the people proceeded to plant their fields. A particular account has been preserved of the sacrifice of a Sioux girl by the Pawnees in April 1837 or 1838. The girl was fourteen or fifteen years old and had been kept for six months and well treated. Two days before the sacrifice she was led from wigwam to wigwam, accompanied by the whole council of chiefs and warriors. At each lodge she received a small billet of wood and a little paint, which she handed to the warrior next to her. In this way she called at every wigwam, receiving at each the same present of wood and paint. On the twenty-second of April she was taken out to be sacrificed, attended by the warriors, each of whom carried two pieces of wood which he had received from her hands. Her body having been painted half red and half black, she was attached to a sort of gibbet and roasted for some time over a slow fire, then shot to death with arrows. The chief sacrificer next tore out her heart and devoured it. While her flesh was still warm it was cut in small pieces from the bones, put in little baskets, and taken to a neighbouring corn-field. There the head chief took a piece of the flesh from a basket and squeezed a drop of blood upon the newly-deposited grains of corn. His example was followed by the rest, till all the seed had been sprinkled with the blood; it was then covered up with earth. According to one account the body of the victim was reduced to a kind of paste, which was rubbed or sprinkled not only on the maize but also on the potatoes, the beans, and other seeds to fertilise them. By this sacrifice they hoped to obtain plentiful crops.

A West African queen used to sacrifice a man and woman in the month of March. They were killed with spades and hoes, and their bodies buried in the middle of a field which had just been tilled. At Lagos in Guinea it was the custom annually to impale a young girl alive soon after the spring equinox in order to secure good crops. Along with her were sacrificed sheep and goats, which, with yams, heads of maize, and plantains, were hung on stakes on each side of her. The victims were bred up for the purpose in the king's seraglio, and their minds had been so powerfully wrought upon by the fetish men that they went cheerfully to their fate. A similar sacrifice used to be annually offered at Benin, in Guinea. The Marimos, a Bechuana tribe, sacrifice a human being for the crops. The victim chosen is generally a short, stout man. He is seized by violence or intoxicated and taken to the fields, where he is killed amongst the wheat to serve as "seed" (so they phrase it). After his blood has coagulated in the sun, it is burned along with the frontal bone, the flesh attached to it, and the brain; the ashes are then scattered over the ground to fertilise it. The rest of the body is eaten.

The Bagobos of Mindanao, one of the Philippine Islands, offer a human sacrifice before they sow their rice. The victim is a slave, who is hewn to pieces in the forest. The natives of Bontoc in the interior of Luzon, one of the Philippine Islands, are passionate head-hunters. Their principal seasons for head-hunting are the times of planting and reaping the rice. In order that the crop may turn out well, every farm must get at least one human head at planting and one at sowing. The head-hunters go out in twos or threes, lie in wait for the victim, whether man or woman, cut off his or her head, hands, and feet, and bring them back in haste to the village, where they are received with great rejoicings. The skulls are at first exposed on the branches of two or three dead trees which stand in an open space of every village surrounded by large stones which serve as seats. The people then dance round them and feast and get drunk. When the flesh has decayed from the head, the man who cut it off takes it home and preserves it as a relic, while his companions do the same with the hands and the feet. Similar customs are observed by the Apoyaos, another tribe in the interior of Luzon.

Among the Lhota Naga, one of the many savage tribes who inhabit the deep rugged labyrinthine glens which wind into the mountains from the rich valley of Brahmapootra, it used to be a common custom to chop off the heads, hands, and feet of people they met with, and then to stick up the severed extremities in their fields to ensure a good crop of grain. They bore no ill-will whatever to the persons upon whom they operated in this unceremonious fashion. Once they flayed a boy alive, carved him in pieces, and distributed the flesh among all the villagers, who put it into their corn-bins to avert bad luck and ensure plentiful crops of grain. The Gonds of India, a Dravidian race, kidnapped Brahman boys, and kept them as victims to be sacrificed on various occasions. At sowing and reaping, after a triumphal

procession, one of the lads was slain by being punctured with a poisoned arrow. His blood was then sprinkled over the ploughed field or the ripe crop, and his flesh was devoured. The Oraons or Uraons of Chota Nagpur worship a goddess called Anna Kuari, who can give good crops and make a man rich, but to induce her to do so it is necessary to offer human sacrifices. In spite of the vigilance of the British Government these sacrifices are said to be still secretly perpetrated. The victims are poor waifs and strays whose disappearance attracts no notice. April and May are the months when the catchpoles are out on the prowl. At that time strangers will not go about the country alone, and parents will not let their children enter the jungle or herd the cattle. When a catchpole has found a victim, he cuts his throat and carries away the upper part of the ring finger and the nose. The goddess takes up her abode in the house of any man who has offered her a sacrifice, and from that time his fields yield a double harvest. The form she assumes in the house is that of a small child. When the householder brings in his unhusked rice, he takes the goddess and rolls her over the heap to double its size. But she soon grows restless and can only be pacified with the blood of fresh human victims.

But the best known case of human sacrifices, systematically offered to ensure good crops, is supplied by the Khonds or Kandhs, another Dravidian race in Bengal. Our knowledge of them is derived from the accounts written by British officers who, about the middle of the nineteenth century, were engaged in putting them down. The sacrifices were offered to the Earth Goddess, Tari Pennu or Bera Pennu, and were believed to ensure good crops and immunity from all disease and accidents. In particular, they were considered necessary in the cultivation of turmeric, the Khonds arguing that the turmeric could not have a deep red colour without the shedding of blood. The victim or Meriah, as he was called, was acceptable to the goddess only if he had been purchased, or had been born a victim—that is, the son of a victim father, or had been devoted as a child by his father or guardian. Khonds in distress often sold their children for victims, "considering the beatification of their souls certain, and their death, for the benefit of mankind, the most honourable possible." A man of the Panua tribe was once seen to load a Khond with curses, and finally to spit in his face, because the Khond had sold for a victim his own child, whom the Panua had wished to marry. A party of Khonds, who saw this, immediately pressed forward to comfort the seller of his child, saying, "Your child has died that all the world may live, and the Earth Goddess herself will wipe that spittle from your face." The victims were often kept for years before they were sacrificed. Being regarded as consecrated beings, they were treated with extreme affection, mingled with deference, and were welcomed wherever they went. A Meriah youth, on attaining maturity, was generally given a wife, who was herself usually a Meriah or victim; and with her he received a portion of land and farm-stock. Their offspring were

also victims. Human sacrifices were offered to the Earth Goddess by tribes, branches of tribes, or villages, both at periodical festivals and on extraordinary occasions. The periodical sacrifices were generally so arranged by tribes and divisions of tribes that each head of a family was enabled, at least once a year, to procure a shred of flesh for his fields, generally about the time when his chief crop was laid down.

The mode of performing these tribal sacrifices was as follows. Ten or twelve days before the sacrifice, the victim was devoted by cutting off his hair, which, until then, had been kept unshorn. Crowds of men and women assembled to witness the sacrifice; none might be excluded, since the sacrifice was declared to be for all mankind. It was preceded by several days of wild revelry and gross debauchery. On the day before the sacrifice the victim, dressed in a new garment, was led forth from the village in solemn procession, with music and dancing, to the Meriah grove, a clump of high forest trees standing a little way from the village and untouched by the axe. There they tied him to a post, which was sometimes placed between two plants of the sankissar shrub. He was then anointed with oil, ghee, and turmeric, and adorned with flowers; and "a species of reverence, which it is not easy to distinguish from adoration," was paid to him throughout the day. A great struggle now arose to obtain the smallest relic from his person; a particle of the turmeric paste with which he was smeared, or a drop of his spittle, was esteemed of sovereign virtue, especially by the women. The crowd danced round the post to music, and, addressing the earth, said, "O God, we offer this sacrifice to you; give us good crops, seasons, and health"; then speaking to the victim they said, "We bought you with a price, and did not seize you; now we sacrifice you according to custom, and no sin rests with us."

On the last morning the orgies, which had been scarcely interrupted during the night, were resumed, and continued till noon, when they ceased, and the assembly proceeded to consummate the sacrifice. The victim was again anointed with oil, and each person touched the anointed part, and wiped the oil on his own head. In some places they took the victim in procession round the village, from door to door, where some plucked hair from his head, and others begged for a drop of his spittle, with which they anointed their heads. As the victim might not be bound nor make any show of resistance, the bones of his arms and, if necessary, his legs were broken; but often this precaution was rendered unnecessary by stupefying him with opium. The mode of putting him to death varied in different places. One of the commonest modes seems to have been strangulation, or squeezing to death. The branch of a green tree was cleft several feet down the middle; the victim's neck (in other places, his chest) was inserted in the cleft, which the priest, aided by his assistants, strove with all his force to close. Then he wounded the victim slightly with his axe, whereupon the crowd rushed at the wretch and hewed the flesh from the bones, leaving the head and bowels untouched. Sometimes

he was cut up alive. In Chinna Kimedy he was dragged along the fields, surrounded by the crowd, who, avoiding his head and intestines, hacked the flesh from his body with their knives till he died. Another very common mode of sacrifice in the same district was to fasten the victim to the proboscis of a wooden elephant, which revolved on a stout post, and, as it whirled round, the crowd cut the flesh from the victim while life remained. In some villages Major Campbell found as many as fourteen of these wooden elephants, which had been used at sacrifices. In one district the victim was put to death slowly by fire. A low stage was formed, sloping on either side like a roof; upon it they laid the victim, his limbs wound round with cords to confine his struggles. Fires were then lighted and hot brands applied, to make him roll up and down the slopes of the stage as long as possible; for the more tears he shed the more abundant would be the supply of rain. Next day the body was cut to pieces.

The flesh cut from the victim was instantly taken home by the persons who had been deputed by each village to bring it. To secure its rapid arrival, it was sometimes forwarded by relays of men, and conveyed with postal fleetness fifty or sixty miles. In each village all who stayed at home fasted rigidly until the flesh arrived. The bearer deposited it in the place of public assembly, where it was received by the priest and the heads of families. The priest divided it into two portions, one of which he offered to the Earth Goddess by burying it in a hole in the ground with his back turned, and without looking. Then each man added a little earth to bury it, and the priest poured water on the spot from a hill gourd. The other portion of flesh he divided into as many shares as there were heads of houses present. Each head of a house rolled his shred of flesh in leaves, and buried it in his favourite field, placing it in the earth behind his back without looking. In some places each man carried his portion of flesh to the stream which watered his fields, and there hung it on a pole. For three days thereafter no house was swept; and, in one district, strict silence was observed, no fire might be given out, no wood cut, and no strangers received. The remains of the human victim (namely, the head, bowels, and bones) were watched by strong parties the night after the sacrifice; and next morning they were burned, along with a whole sheep, on a funeral pile. The ashes were scattered over the fields, laid as paste over the houses and granaries, or mixed with the new corn to preserve it from insects. Sometimes, however, the head and bones were buried, not burnt. After the suppression of the human sacrifices, inferior victims were substituted in some places; for instance, in the capital of Chinna Kimedy a goat took the place of the human victim. Others sacrifice a buffalo. They tie it to a wooden post in a sacred grove, dance wildly round it with brandished knives, then, falling on the living animal, hack it to shreds and tatters in a few minutes, fighting and struggling with each other for every particle of flesh. As soon as a man has secured a piece he makes off with it at full speed to bury it in his fields, according to

ancient custom, before the sun has set, and as some of them have far to go they must run very fast. All the women throw clods of earth at the rapidly retreating figures of the men, some of them taking very good aim. Soon the sacred grove, so lately a scene of tumult, is silent and deserted except for a few people who remain to guard all that is left of the buffalo, to wit, the head, the bones, and the stomach, which are burned with ceremony at the foot of the stake.

In these Khond sacrifices the Meriahs are represented by our authorities as victims offered to propitiate the Earth Goddess. But from the treatment of the victims both before and after death it appears that the custom cannot be explained as merely a propitiatory sacrifice. A part of the flesh certainly was offered to the Earth Goddess, but the rest was buried by each householder in his fields, and the ashes of the other parts of the body were scattered over the fields, laid as paste on the granaries, or mixed with the new corn. These latter customs imply that to the body of the Meriah there was ascribed a direct or intrinsic power of making the crops to grow, quite independent of the indirect efficacy which it might have as an offering to secure the good-will of the deity. In other words, the flesh and ashes of the victim were believed to be endowed with a magical or physical power of fertilising the land. The same intrinsic power was ascribed to the blood and tears of the Meriah, his blood causing the redness of the turmeric and his tears producing rain; for it can hardly be doubted that, originally at least, the tears were supposed to bring down the rain, not merely to prognosticate it. Similarly the custom of pouring water on the buried flesh of the Meriah was no doubt a rain-charm. Again, magical power as an attribute of the Meriah appears in the sovereign virtue believed to reside in anything that came from his person, as his hair or spittle. The ascription of such power to the Meriah indicates that he was much more than a mere man sacrificed to propitiate a deity. Once more, the extreme reverence paid him points to the same conclusion. Major Campbell speaks of the Meriah as "being regarded as something more than mortal," and Major Macpherson says, "A species of reverence, which it is not easy to distinguish from adoration, is paid to him." In short, the Meriah seems to have been regarded as divine. As such, he may originally have represented the Earth Goddess or, perhaps, a deity of vegetation; though in later times he came to be regarded rather as a victim offered to a deity than as himself an incarnate god. This later view of the Meriah as a victim rather than a divinity may perhaps have received undue emphasis from the European writers who have described the Khond religion. Habituated to the later idea of sacrifice as an offering made to a god for the purpose of conciliating his favour, European observers are apt to interpret all religious slaughter in this sense, and to suppose that wherever such slaughter takes place, there must necessarily be a deity to whom the carnage is believed by the slayers to be acceptable. Thus their preconceived ideas may unconsciously colour and warp their descriptions of savage rites.

The same custom of killing the representative of a god, of which strong traces appear in the Khond sacrifices, may perhaps be detected in some of the other human sacrifices described above. Thus the ashes of the slaughtered Marimo were scattered over the fields; the blood of the Brahman lad was put on the crop and field; the flesh of the slain Naga was stowed in the corn-bin; and the blood of the Sioux girl was allowed to trickle on the seed. Again, the identification of the victim with the corn, in other words, the view that he is an embodiment or spirit of the corn, is brought out in the pains which seem to be taken to secure a physical correspondence between him and the natural object which he embodies or represents. Thus the Mexicans killed young victims for the young corn and old ones for the ripe corn; the Marimos sacrifice, as "seed," a short, fat man, the shortness of his stature corresponding to that of the young corn, his fatness to the condition which it is desired that the crops may attain; and the Pawnees fattened their victims probably with the same view. Again, the identification of the victim with the corn comes out in the African custom of killing him with spades and hoes, and the Mexican custom of grinding him, like corn, between two stones.

One more point in these savage customs deserves to be noted. The Pawnee chief devoured the heart of the Sioux girl, and the Marimos and Gonds ate the victim's flesh. If, as we suppose, the victim was regarded as divine, it follows that in eating his flesh his worshippers believed themselves to be partaking of the body of their god.

§ 4. *The Corn-spirit slain in his Human Representatives.*—The barbarous rites just described offer analogies to the harvest customs of Europe. Thus the fertilising virtue ascribed to the corn-spirit is shown equally in the savage custom of mixing the victim's blood or ashes with the seed-corn and the European custom of mixing the grain from the last sheaf with the young corn in spring. Again, the identification of the person with the corn appears alike in the savage custom of adapting the age and stature of the victim to the age and stature, whether actual or expected, of the crop; in the Scotch and Styrian rules that when the corn-spirit is conceived as the Maiden the last corn shall be cut by a young maiden, but when it is conceived as the Corn-mother it shall be cut by an old woman; in the warning given to old women in Lorraine to save themselves when the Old Woman is being killed, that is, when the last corn is being threshed; and in the Tyrolese expectation that if the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is tall, the next year's corn will be tall also. Further, the same identification is implied in the savage custom of killing the representative of the corn-spirit with hoes or spades or by grinding him between stones, and in the European custom of pretending to kill him with the scythe or the flail. Once more the Khond custom of pouring water on the buried flesh of the victim is parallel to the European customs of pouring water on the personal representative of the corn-spirit or plunging him into a stream. Both the Khond and the European customs are rain-charms.

To return now to the Lityerses story. It has been shown that in rude society human beings have been commonly killed to promote the growth of the crops. There is therefore no improbability in the supposition that they may once have been killed for a like purpose in Phrygia and Europe; and when Phrygian legend and European folk-custom, closely agreeing with each other, point to the conclusion that men were so slain, we are bound, provisionally at least, to accept the conclusion. Further, both the Lityerses story and European harvest-customs agree in indicating that the victim was put to death as a representative of the corn-spirit, and this indication is in harmony with the view which some savages appear to take of the victim slain to make the crops flourish. On the whole, then, we may fairly suppose that both in Phrygia and in Europe the representative of the corn-spirit was annually killed upon the harvest-field. Grounds have been already shown for believing that similarly in Europe the representative of the tree-spirit was annually slain. The proofs of these two remarkable and closely analogous customs are entirely independent of each other. Their coincidence seems to furnish fresh presumption in favour of both.

To the question, How was the representative of the corn-spirit chosen? one answer has been already given. Both the Lityerses story and European folk-custom show that passing strangers were regarded as manifestations of the corn-spirit escaping from the cut or threshed corn, and as such were seized and slain. But this is not the only answer which the evidence suggests. According to the Phrygian legend the victims of Lityerses were not simply passing strangers, but persons whom he had vanquished in a reaping contest and afterwards wrapt up in corn-sheaves and beheaded. This suggests that the representative of the corn-spirit may have been selected by means of a competition on the harvest-field, in which the vanquished competitor was compelled to accept the fatal honour. The supposition is countenanced by European harvest-customs. We have seen that in Europe there is sometimes a contest amongst the reapers to avoid being last, and that the person who is vanquished in this competition, that is, who cuts the last corn, is often roughly handled. It is true we have not found that a pretence is made of killing him; but on the other hand we have found that a pretence is made of killing the man who gives the last stroke at threshing, that is, who is vanquished in the threshing contest. Now, since it is in the character of representative of the corn-spirit that the thresher of the last corn is slain in mimicry, and since the same representative character attaches (as we have seen) to the cutter and binder as well as to the thresher of the last corn, and since the same repugnance is evinced by harvesters to be last in any one of these labours, we may conjecture that a pretence has been commonly made of killing the reaper and binder as well as the thresher of the last corn, and that in ancient times this killing was actually carried out. This conjecture is corroborated by the common superstition that whoever cuts the last corn must

die soon. Sometimes it is thought that the person who binds the last sheaf on the field will die in the course of next year. The reason for fixing on the reaper, binder, or thresher of the last corn as the representative of the corn-spirit may be this. The corn-spirit is supposed to lurk as long as he can in the corn, retreating before the reapers, the binders, and the threshers at their work. But when he is forcibly expelled from his refuge in the last corn cut or the last sheaf bound or the last grain threshed, he necessarily assumes some other form than that of the corn-stalks, which had hitherto been his garment or body. And what form can the expelled corn-spirit assume more naturally than that of the person who stands nearest to the corn from which he (the corn-spirit) has just been expelled? But the person in question is necessarily the reaper, binder, or thresher of the last corn. He or she, therefore, is seized and treated as the corn-spirit himself.

Thus the person who was killed on the harvest-field as the representative of the corn-spirit may have been either a passing stranger or the harvester who was last at reaping, binding, or threshing. But there is a third possibility, to which ancient legend and modern folk-custom alike point. Lityerses not only put strangers to death; he was himself slain, and apparently in the same way as he had slain others, namely, by being wrapt in a corn-sheaf, beheaded, and cast into the river; and it is implied that this happened to Lityerses on his own land. Similarly in modern harvest-customs the pretence of killing appears to be carried out quite as often on the person of the master (farmer or squire) as on that of strangers. Now when we remember that Lityerses was said to have been a son of the King of Phrygia, and that in one account he is himself called a king, and when we combine with this the tradition that he was put to death, apparently as a representative of the corn-spirit, we are led to conjecture that we have here another trace of the custom of annually slaying one of those divine or priestly kings who are known to have held ghostly sway in many parts of Western Asia and particularly in Phrygia. The custom appears, as we have seen, to have been so far modified in places that the king's son was slain in the king's stead. Of the custom thus modified the story of Lityerses would be, in one version at least, a reminiscence.

Turning now to the relation of the Phrygian Lityerses to the Phrygian Attis, it may be remembered that at Pessinus—the seat of a priestly kingship—the high-priest appears to have been annually slain in the character of Attis, a god of vegetation, and that Attis was described by an ancient authority as "a reaped ear of corn." Thus Attis, as an embodiment of the corn-spirit, annually slain in the person of his representative, might be thought to be ultimately identical with Lityerses, the latter being simply the rustic prototype out of which the state religion of Attis was developed. It may have been so; but, on the other hand, the analogy of European folk-custom warns us that amongst the same people two distinct deities

of vegetation may have their separate personal representatives, both of whom are slain in the character of gods at different times of the year. For in Europe, as we have seen, it appears that one man was commonly slain in the character of the tree-spirit in spring, and another in the character of the corn-spirit in autumn. It may have been so in Phrygia also. Attis was especially a tree-god, and his connexion with corn may have been only such an extension of the power of a tree-spirit as is indicated in customs like the Harvest-May. Again, the representative of Attis appears to have been slain in spring; whereas Lityerses must have been slain in summer or autumn, according to the time of the harvest in Phrygia. On the whole, then, while we are not justified in regarding Lityerses as the prototype of Attis, the two may be regarded as parallel products of the same religious idea, and may have stood to each other as in Europe the Old Man of harvest stands to the Wild Man, the Leaf Man, and so forth, of spring. Both were spirits or deities of vegetation, and the personal representatives of both were annually slain. But whereas the Attis worship became elevated into the dignity of a state religion and spread to Italy, the rites of Lityerses seem never to have passed the limits of their native Phrygia, and always retained their character of rustic ceremonies performed by peasants on the harvest-field. At most a few villages may have clubbed together, as amongst the Khonds, to procure a human victim to be slain as representative of the corn-spirit for their common benefit. Such victims may have been drawn from the families of priestly kings or kinglets, which would account for the legendary character of Lityerses as the son of a Phrygian king or as himself a king. When villages did not so club together, each village or farm may have procured its own representative of the corn-spirit by dooming to death either a passing stranger or the harvester who cut, bound, or threshed the last sheaf. Perhaps in the olden time the practice of head-hunting as a means of promoting the growth of the corn may have been as common among the rude inhabitants of Europe and Western Asia as it still is, or was till lately, among the primitive agricultural tribes of Assam, Burma, the Philippine Islands, and the Indian Archipelago. It is hardly necessary to add that in Phrygia, as in Europe, the old barbarous custom of killing a man on the harvest-field or the threshing-floor had doubtless passed into a mere pretence long before the classical era, and was probably regarded by the reapers and threshers themselves as no more than a rough jest which the license of a harvest-home permitted them to play off on a passing stranger, a comrade, or even on their master himself.

I have dwelt on the Lityerses song at length because it affords so many points of comparison with European and savage folk-custom. The other harvest songs of Western Asia and Egypt, to which attention has been called above, may now be dismissed much more briefly. The similarity of the Bithynian Bormus to the Phrygian Lityerses helps to bear out the interpretation which has been given of the latter.

Bormus, whose death or rather disappearance was annually mourned by the reapers in a plaintive song, was, like Lityerses, a king's son or at least the son of a wealthy and distinguished man. The reapers whom he watched were at work on his own fields, and he disappeared in going to fetch water for them; according to one version of the story he was carried off by the nymphs, doubtless the nymphs of the spring or pool or river whither he went to draw water. Viewed in the light of the Lityerses story and of European folk-custom, this disappearance of Bormus may be a reminiscence of the custom of binding the farmer himself in a corn-sheaf and throwing him into the water. The mournful strain which the reapers sang was probably a lamentation over the death of the corn-spirit, slain either in the cut corn or in the person of a human representative; and the call which they addressed to him may have been a prayer that he might return in fresh vigour next year.

The Phoenician Linus song was sung at the vintage, at least in the west of Asia Minor, as we learn from Homer; and this, combined with the legend of Syleus, suggests that in ancient times passing strangers were handled by vintagers and vine-diggers in much the same way as they are said to have been handled by the reaper Lityerses. The Lydian Syleus, so ran the legend, compelled passers-by to dig for him in his vineyard, till Hercules came and killed him and dug up his vines by the roots. This seems to be the outline of a legend like that of Lityerses; but neither ancient writers nor modern folk-custom enable us to fill in the details. But, further, the Linus song was probably sung also by Phoenician reapers, for Herodotus compares it to the Maneros song, which, as we have seen, was a lament raised by Egyptian reapers over the cut corn. Further, Linus was identified with Adonis, and Adonis has some claims to be regarded as especially a corn-deity. Thus the Linus lament, as sung at harvest, would be identical with the Adonis lament; each would be the lamentation raised by reapers over the dead spirit of the corn. But whereas Adonis, like Attis, grew into a stately figure of mythology, adored and mourned in splendid cities far beyond the limits of his Phoenician home, Linus appears to have remained a simple ditty sung by reapers and vintagers among the corn-sheaves and the vines. The analogy of Lityerses and of folk-custom, both European and savage, suggests that in Phoenicia the slain corn-spirit—the dead Adonis—may formerly have been represented by a human victim; and this suggestion is possibly supported by the Harran legend that Tammuz (Adonis) was slain by his cruel lord, who ground his bones in a mill and scattered them to the wind. For in Mexico, as we have seen, the human victim at harvest was crushed between two stones; and both in Africa and India the ashes or other remains of the victim were scattered over the fields. But the Harran legend may be only a mythical way of expressing the grinding of corn in the mill and the scattering of the seed. It seems worth suggesting that the mock king who was annually killed at the Babylonian festival of the Sacaea

on the sixteenth day of the month Lous may have represented Tammuz himself. For the historian Berosus, who records the festival and its date, probably used the Macedonian calendar, since he dedicated his history to Antiochus Soter; and in his day the Macedonian month Lous appears to have corresponded to the Babylonian month Tammuz. If this conjecture is right, the view that the mock king at the Sacaea was slain in the character of a god would be established.

There is a good deal more evidence that in Egypt the slain corn-spirit—the dead Osiris—was represented by a human victim, whom the reapers slew on the harvest-field, mourning his death in a dirge, to which the Greeks, through a verbal misunderstanding, gave the name of Maneros. For the legend of Busiris seems to preserve a reminiscence of human sacrifices once offered by the Egyptians in connexion with the worship of Osiris. Busiris was said to have been an Egyptian king who sacrificed all strangers on the altar of Zeus. The origin of the custom was traced to a dearth which afflicted the land of Egypt for nine years. A Cyprian seer informed Busiris that the dearth would cease if a man were annually sacrificed to Zeus. So Busiris instituted the sacrifice. But when Hercules came to Egypt, and was being dragged to the altar to be sacrificed, he burst his bonds and slew Busiris and his son. Here then is a legend that in Egypt a human victim was annually sacrificed to prevent the failure of the crops, and a belief is implied that an omission of the sacrifice would have entailed a recurrence of that infertility which it was the object of the sacrifice to prevent. So the Pawnees, as we have seen, believed that an omission of the human sacrifice at planting would have been followed by a total failure of their crops. The name Busiris was in reality the name of a city, *pe-Asar,* "the house of Osiris," the city being so called because it contained the grave of Osiris. Indeed some high modern authorities believe that Busiris was the original home of Osiris, from which his worship spread to other parts of Egypt. The human sacrifice were said to have been offered at his grave, and the victims were red-haired men, whose ashes were scattered abroad by means of winnowing-fans. This tradition of human sacrifices offered at the tomb of Osiris is confirmed by the evidence of the monuments.

In the light of the foregoing discussion the Egyptian tradition of Busiris admits of a consistent and fairly probable explanation. Osiris, the corn-spirit, was annually represented at harvest by a stranger, whose red hair made him a suitable representative of the ripe corn. This man, in his representative character, was slain on the harvest-field, and mourned by the reapers, who prayed at the same time that the corn-spirit might revive and return (*mââ-ne-rha,* Maneros) with renewed vigour in the following year. Finally, the victim, or some part of him, was burned, and the ashes scattered by winnowing-fans over the fields to fertilise them. Here the choice of the victim on the ground of his resemblance to the corn which he was to represent agrees with the Mexican and African customs already described. Similarly the woman who died in the character of the Corn-mother at the Mexican

midsummer sacrifice had her face painted red and yellow in token of the colours of the corn, and she wore a pasteboard mitre surmounted by waving plumes in imitation of the tassel of the maize. On the other hand, at the festival of the Goddess of the White Maize the Mexicans sacrificed lepers. The Romans sacrificed red-haired puppies in spring to avert the supposed blighting influence of the Dog-star, believing that the crops would thus grow ripe and ruddy. The heathen of Harran offered to the sun, moon, and planets human victims who were chosen on the ground of their supposed resemblance to the heavenly bodies to which they were sacrificed; for example, the priests, clothed in red and smeared with blood, offered a red-haired, red-cheeked man to "the red planet Mars" in a temple which was painted red and draped with red hangings. These and the like cases of assimilating the victim to the god, or to the natural phenomenon which he represents, are based ultimately on the principle of homoeopathic or imitative magic, the notion being that the object aimed at will be most readily attained by means of a sacrifice which resembles the effect that it is designed to bring about.

The story that the fragments of Osiris's body were scattered up and down the land, and buried by Isis on the spots where they lay, may very well be a reminiscence of a custom, like that observed by the Khonds, of dividing the human victim in pieces and burying the pieces, often at intervals of many miles from each other, in the fields.

Thus, if I am right, the key to the mysteries of Osiris is furnished by the melancholy cry of the Egyptian reapers, which down to Roman times could be heard year after year sounding across the fields, announcing the death of the corn-spirit, the rustic prototype of Osiris. Similar cries, as we have seen, were also heard on all the harvest-fields of Western Asia. By the ancients they are spoken of as songs; but to judge from the analysis of the names Linus and Maneros, they probably consisted only of a few words uttered in a prolonged musical note which could be heard at a great distance. Such sonorous and long-drawn cries, raised by a number of strong voices in concert, must have had a striking effect, and could hardly fail to arrest the attention of any wayfarer who happened to be within hearing. The sounds, repeated again and again, could probably be distinguished with tolerable ease even at a distance; but to a Greek traveller in Asia or Egypt the foreign words would commonly convey no meaning, and he might take them, not unnaturally, for the name of some one (Maneros, Linus, Lityerses, Bormus) upon whom the reapers were calling. And if his journey led him through more countries than one, as Bithynia and Phrygia, or Phoenicia and Egypt, while the corn was being reaped, he would have an opportunity of comparing the various harvest cries of the different peoples. Thus we can readily understand why these harvest cries were so often noted and compared with each other by the Greeks. Whereas, if they had been regular songs, they could not have been heard at such distances, and therefore could not have attracted the attention of so many travellers; and, moreover, even if

the wayfarer were within hearing of them, he could not so easily have picked out the words.

Down to recent times Devonshire reapers uttered cries of the same sort, and performed on the field a ceremony exactly analogous to that in which, if I am not mistaken, the rites of Osiris originated. The cry and the ceremony are thus described by an observer who wrote in the first half of the nineteenth century. "After the wheat is all cut, on most farms in the north of Devon, the harvest people have a custom of 'crying the neck.' I believe that this practice is seldom omitted on any large farm in that part of the country. It is done in this way. An old man, or some one else well acquainted with the ceremonies used on the occasion (when the labourers are reaping the last field of wheat), goes round to the shocks and sheaves, and picks out a little bundle of all the best ears he can find; this bundle he ties up very neat and trim, and plats and arranges the straws very tastefully. This is called 'the neck' of wheat, or wheaten-ears. After the field is cut out, and the pitcher once more circulated, the reapers, binders, and the women stand round in a circle. The person with 'the neck' stands in the centre, grasping it with both hands. He first stoops and holds it near the ground, and all the men forming the ring take off their hats, stooping and holding them with both hands towards the ground. They then all begin at once in a very prolonged and harmonious tone to cry 'The neck!' at the same time slowly raising themselves upright, and elevating their arms and hats above their heads; the person with 'the neck' also raising it on high. This is done three times. They then change their cry to 'Wee yen!'—'Way yen!'—which they sound in the same prolonged and slow manner as before, with singular harmony and effect, three times. This last cry is accompanied by the same movements of the body and arms as in crying 'the neck.' . . . After having thus repeated 'the neck' three times, and 'wee yen,' or 'way yen' as often, they all burst out into a kind of loud and joyous laugh, flinging up their hats and caps into the air, capering about and perhaps kissing the girls. One of them then gets 'the neck' and runs as hard as he can down to the farmhouse, where the dairymaid, or one of the young female domestics, stands at the door prepared with a pail of water. If he who holds 'the neck' can manage to get into the house, in any way unseen, or openly, by any other way than the door at which the girl stands with the pail of water, then he may lawfully kiss her; but, if otherwise, he is regularly soused with the contents of the bucket. On a fine still autumn evening the 'crying of the neck' has a wonderful effect at a distance, far finer than that of the Turkish muezzin, which Lord Byron eulogises so much, and which he says is preferable to all the bells of Christendom. I have once or twice heard upwards of twenty men cry it, and sometimes joined by an equal number of female voices. About three years back, on some high grounds, where our people were harvesting, I heard six or seven 'necks' cried in one night, although I know that some of them were four miles off. They are heard through the quiet evening air at a

considerable distance sometimes." Again, Mrs. Bray tells how, travelling in Devonshire, "she saw a party of reapers standing in a circle on a rising ground, holding their sickles aloft. One in the middle held up some ears of corn tied together with flowers, and the party shouted three times (what she writes as) 'Arnack, arnack, arnack, we *haven*, we *haven*, we *haven*.' They went home, accompanied by women and children carrying boughs of flowers, shouting and singing. The manservant who attended Mrs. Bray said 'it was only the people making their games, as they always did, *to the spirit of harvest*.'" Here, as Miss Burne remarks, "'arnack, we haven!' is obviously in the Devon dialect, 'a neck (or nack)! we have un!'"

Another account of this old custom, written at Truro in 1839, runs thus: "Now, when all the corn was cut at Heligan, the farming men and maidens come in front of the house, and bring with them a small sheaf of corn, the last that has been cut, and this is adorned with ribbons and flowers, and one part is tied quite tight, so as to look like a neck. Then they cry out 'Our (my) side, my side,' as loud as they can; then the dairymaid gives the neck to the head farming-man. He takes it, and says, very loudly three times, 'I have him, I have him, I have him.' Then another farming-man shouts very loudly, 'What have ye? what have ye? what have ye?' Then the first says, 'A neck, a neck, a neck.' And when he has said this, all the people make a very great shouting. This they do three times, and after one famous shout go away and eat supper, and dance, and sing songs." According to another account, "all went out to the field when the last corn was cut, the 'neck' was tied with ribbons and plaited, and they danced round it, and carried it to the great kitchen, where by-and-by the supper was. The words were as given in the previous account, and 'Hip, hip, hack, heck, I have 'ee, I have 'ee, I have 'ee.' It was hung up in the hall." Another account relates that one of the men rushed from the field with the last sheaf, while the rest pursued him with vessels of water, which they tried to throw over the sheaf before it could be brought into the barn.

In the foregoing customs a particular bunch of ears, generally the last left standing, is conceived as the neck of the corn-spirit, who is consequently beheaded when the bunch is cut down. Similarly in Shropshire the name "neck," or "the gander's neck," used to be commonly given to the last handful of ears left standing in the middle of the field when all the rest of the corn was cut. It was plaited together, and the reapers, standing ten or twenty paces off, threw their sickles at it. Whoever cut it through was said to have cut off the gander's neck. The "neck" was taken to the farmer's wife, who was supposed to keep it in the house for good luck till the next harvest came round. Near Trèves, the man who reaps the last standing corn "cuts the goat's neck off." At Faslane, on the Gareloch (Dumbartonshire), the last handful of standing corn was sometimes called the "head." At Aurich, in East Friesland, the man who reaps the last corn "cuts the hare's tail off." In mowing down the last corner of a

field French reapers sometimes call out, "We have the cat by the tail." In Bresse (Bourgogne) the last sheaf represented the fox. Beside it a score of ears were left standing to form the tail, and each reaper, going back some paces, threw his sickle at it. He who succeeded in severing it "cut off the fox's tail," and a cry of "*You cou cou!*" was raised in his honour. These examples leave no room to doubt the meaning of the Devonshire and Cornish expression "the neck," as applied to the last sheaf. The corn-spirit is conceived in human or animal form, and the last standing corn is part of its body—its neck, its head, or its tail. Sometimes, as we have seen, the last corn is regarded as the navel-string. Lastly, the Devonshire custom of drenching with water the person who brings in "the neck" is a rain-charm, such as we have had many examples of. Its parallel in the mysteries of Osiris was the custom of pouring water on the image of Osiris or on the person who represented him.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE CORN-SPIRIT AS AN ANIMAL

§ 1. *Animal Embodiments of the Corn-spirit.*—In some of the examples which I have cited to establish the meaning of the term "neck" as applied to the last sheaf, the corn-spirit appears in animal form as a gander, a goat, a hare, a cat, and a fox. This introduces us to a new aspect of the corn-spirit, which we must now examine. By doing so we shall not only have fresh examples of killing the god, but may hope also to clear up some points which remain obscure in the myths and worship of Adonis, Attis, Osiris, Dionysus, Demeter, and Virbius.

Amongst the many animals whose forms the corn-spirit is supposed to take are the wolf, dog, hare, fox, cock, goose, quail, cat, goat, cow (ox, bull), pig, and horse. In one or other of these shapes the corn-spirit is often believed to be present in the corn, and to be caught or killed in the last sheaf. As the corn is being cut the animal flees before the reapers, and if a reaper is taken ill on the field, he is supposed to have stumbled unwittingly on the corn-spirit, who has thus punished the profane intruder. It is said "the Rye-wolf has got hold of him," "the Harvest-goat has given him a push." The person who cuts the last corn or binds the last sheaf gets the name of the animal, as the Rye-wolf, the Rye-sow, the Oats-goat, and so forth, and retains the name sometimes for a year. Also the animal is frequently represented by a puppet made out of the last sheaf or of wood, flowers, and so on, which is carried home amid rejoicings on the last harvest-waggon. Even where the last sheaf is not made up in animal shape, it is often called the Rye-wolf, the Hare, Goat, and so forth. Generally each kind of crop is supposed to have its special animal, which is caught in the last sheaf, and called the Rye-wolf.

the Barley-wolf, the Oats-wolf, the Pea-wolf, or the Potato-wolf, according to the crop; but sometimes the figure of the animal is only made up once for all at getting in the last crop of the whole harvest. Sometimes the creature is believed to be killed by the last stroke of the sickle or scythe. But oftener it is thought to live so long as there is corn still unthreshed, and to be caught in the last sheaf threshed. Hence the man who gives the last stroke with the flail is told that he has got the Corn-sow, the Threshing-dog, or the like. When the threshing is finished, a puppet is made in the form of the animal, and this is carried by the thresher of the last sheaf to a neighbouring farm, where the threshing is still going on. This again shows that the corn-spirit is believed to live wherever the corn is still being threshed. Sometimes the thresher of the last sheaf himself represents the animal; and if the people of the next farm, who are still threshing, catch him, they treat him like the animal he represents, by shutting him up in the pig-sty, calling him with the cries commonly addressed to pigs, and so forth. These general statements will now be illustrated by examples.

§ 2. *The Corn-spirit as a Wolf or a Dog.*—We begin with the corn-spirit conceived as a wolf or a dog. This conception is common in France, Germany, and Slavonic countries. Thus, when the wind sets the corn in wave-like motion the peasants often say, "The Wolf is going over, or through, the corn," "the Rye-wolf is rushing over the field," "the Wolf is in the corn," "the mad Dog is in the corn," "the big Dog is there." When children wish to go into the corn-fields to pluck ears or gather the blue corn-flowers, they are warned not to do so, for "the big Dog sits in the corn," or "the Wolf sits in the corn, and will tear you in pieces," "the Wolf will eat you." The wolf against whom the children are warned is not a common wolf, for he is often spoken of as the Corn-wolf, Rye-wolf, or the like; thus they say, "The Rye-wolf will come and eat you up, children," "the Rye-wolf will carry you off," and so forth. Still he has all the outward appearance of a wolf. For in the neighbourhood of Feilenhof (East Prussia), when a wolf was seen running through a field, the peasants used to watch whether he carried his tail in the air or dragged it on the ground. If he dragged it on the ground, they went after him, and thanked him for bringing them a blessing, and even set tit-bits before him. But if he carried his tail high, they cursed him and tried to kill him. Here the wolf is the corn-spirit whose fertilising power is in his tail.

Both dog and wolf appear as embodiments of the corn-spirit in harvest-customs. Thus in some parts of Silesia the person who cuts or binds the last sheaf is called the Wheat-dog or the Peas-pug. But it is in the harvest-customs of the north-east of France that the idea of the Corn-dog comes out most clearly. Thus when a harvester, through sickness, weariness, or laziness, cannot or will not keep up with the reaper in front of him, they say, "The White Dog passed near him," "he has the White Bitch," or "the White Bitch has

bitten him. In the Vosges the Harvest-May is called the "Dog of the harvest," and the person who cuts the last handful of hay or wheat is said to "kill the Dog." About Lons-le-Saulnier, in the Jura, the last sheaf is called the Bitch. In the neighbourhood of Verdun the regular expression for finishing the reaping is, "They are going to kill the Dog"; and at Epinal they say, according to the crop, "We will kill the Wheat-dog, or the Rye-dog, or the Potato-dog." In Lorraine it is said of the man who cuts the last corn, "He is killing the Dog of the harvest." At Dux, in the Tyrol, the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is said to "strike down the Dog"; and at Ahnebergen, near Stade, he is called, according to the crop, Corn-pug, Rye-pug, Wheat-pug.

So with the wolf. In Silesia, when the reapers gather round the last patch of standing corn to reap it they are said to be about "to catch the Wolf." In various parts of Mecklenburg, where the belief in the Corn-wolf is particularly prevalent, every one fears to cut the last corn, because they say that the Wolf is sitting in it; hence every reaper exerts himself to the utmost in order not to be the last, and every woman similarly fears to bind the last sheaf because "the Wolf is in it." So both among the reapers and the binders there is a competition not to be the last to finish. And in Germany generally it appears to be a common saying that "the Wolf sits in the last sheaf." In some places they call out to the reaper, "Beware of the Wolf"; or they say, "He is chasing the Wolf out of the corn." In Mecklenburg the last bunch of standing corn is itself commonly called the Wolf, and the man who reaps it "has the Wolf," the animal being described as the Rye-wolf, the Wheat-wolf, the Barley-wolf, and so on according to the particular crop. The reaper of the last corn is himself called Wolf or the Rye-wolf, if the crop is rye, and in many parts of Mecklenburg he has to support the character by pretending to bite the other harvesters or by howling like a wolf. The last sheaf of corn is also called the Wolf or the Rye-wolf or the Oats-wolf according to the crop, and of the woman who binds it they say, "The Wolf is biting her," "She has the Wolf," "She must fetch the Wolf" (out of the corn). Moreover, she herself is called Wolf; they cry out to her, "Thou art the Wolf," and she has to bear the name for a whole year; sometimes, according to the crop, she is called the Rye-wolf or the Potato-wolf. In the island of Rügen not only is the woman who binds the last sheaf called Wolf, but when she comes home she bites the lady of the house and the stewardess, for which she receives a large piece of meat. Yet nobody likes to be the Wolf. The same woman may be Rye-wolf, Wheat-wolf, and Oats-wolf, if she happens to bind the last sheaf of rye, wheat, and oats. At Buir, in the district of Cologne, it was formerly the custom to give to the last sheaf the shape of a wolf. It was kept in the barn till all the corn was threshed. Then it was brought to the farmer and he had to sprinkle it with beer or brandy. At Brunshaupten in Mecklenburg the young woman who bound the last sheaf of wheat

used to take a handful of stalks out of it and make "the Wheat-wolf" with them; it was the figure of a wolf about two feet long and half a foot high, the legs of the animal being represented by stiff stalks and its tail and mane by wheat-ears. This Wheat-wolf she carried back at the head of the harvesters to the village, where it was set up on a high place in the parlour of the farm and remained there for a long time. In many places the sheaf called the Wolf is made up in human form and dressed in clothes. This indicates a confusion of ideas between the corn-spirit conceived in human and in animal form. Generally the Wolf is brought home on the last waggon with joyful cries. Hence the last waggon-load itself receives the name of the Wolf.

Again, the Wolf is supposed to hide himself amongst the cut corn in the granary, until he is driven out of the last bundle by the strokes of the flail. Hence at Wanzleben, near Magdeburg, after the threshing the peasants go in procession, leading by a chain a man who is enveloped in the threshed-out straw and is called the Wolf. He represents the corn-spirit who has been caught escaping from the threshed corn. In the district of Treves it is believed that the Corn-wolf is killed at threshing. The men thresh the last sheaf till it is reduced to chopped straw. In this way they think that the Corn-wolf, who was lurking in the last sheaf, has been certainly killed.

In France also the Corn-wolf appears at harvest. Thus they call out to the reaper of the last corn, "You will catch the Wolf." Near Chambéry they form a ring round the last standing corn, and cry, "The Wolf is in there." In Finisterre, when the reaping draws near an end, the harvesters cry, "There is the Wolf; we will catch him." Each takes a swath to reap, and he who finishes first calls out, "I've caught the Wolf." In Guyenne, when the last corn has been reaped, they lead a wether all round the field. It is called "the Wolf of the field." Its horns are decked with a wreath of flowers and corn-ears, and its neck and body are also encircled with garlands and ribbons. All the reapers march, singing, behind it. Then it is killed on the field. In this part of France the last sheaf is called the *coujoulage*, which, in the patois, means a wether. Hence the killing of the wether represents the death of the corn-spirit, considered as present in the last sheaf; but two different conceptions of the corn-spirit—as a wolf and as a wether—are mixed up together.

Sometimes it appears to be thought that the Wolf, caught in the last corn, lives during the winter in the farmhouse, ready to renew his activity as corn-spirit in the spring. Hence at midwinter, when the lengthening days begin to herald the approach of spring, the Wolf makes his appearance once more. In Poland a man, with a wolf's skin thrown over his head, is led about at Christmas; or a stuffed wolf is carried about by persons who collect money. There are facts which point to an old custom of leading about a man enveloped in leaves and called the Wolf, while his conductors collected money.

§ 3. *The Corn-spirit as a Cock.*—Another form which the corn-

spirit often assumes is that of a cock. In Austria children are warned against straying in the corn-fields, because the Corn-cock sits there, and will peck their eyes out. In North Germany they say that "the Cock sits in the last sheaf"; and at cutting the last corn the reapers cry, "Now we will chase out the Cock." When it is cut they say, "We have caught the Cock." At Braller, in Transylvania, when the reapers come to the last patch of corn, they cry, "Here we shall catch the Cock." At Fürstenwalde, when the last sheaf is about to be bound, the master releases a cock, which he has brought in a basket, and lets it run over the field. All the harvesters chase it till they catch it. Elsewhere the harvesters all try to seize the last corn cut; he who succeeds in grasping it must crow, and is called Cock. Among the Wends it is or used to be customary for the farmer to hide a live cock under the last sheaf as it lay on the field; and when the corn was being gathered up, the harvester who lighted upon this sheaf had a right to keep the cock, provided he could catch it. This formed the close of the harvest-festival and was known as "the Cock-catching," and the beer which was served out to the reapers at this time went by the name of "Cock-beer." The last sheaf is called Cock, Cock-sheaf, Harvest-cock, Harvest-hen, Autumn-hen. A distinction is made between a Wheat-cock, Bean-cock, and so on, according to the crop. At Wünschensuhl, in Thüringen, the last sheaf is made into the shape of a cock, and called the Harvest-cock. A figure of a cock, made of wood, pasteboard, ears of corn, or flowers, is borne in front of the harvest-waggon, especially in Westphalia, where the cock carries in his beak fruits of the earth of all kinds. Sometimes the image of the cock is fastened to the top of a May-tree on the last harvest-waggon. Elsewhere a live cock, or a figure of one, is attached to a harvest-crown and carried on a pole. In Galicia and elsewhere this live cock is fastened to the garland of corn-ears or flowers, which the leader of the women-reapers carries on her head as she marches in front of the harvest procession. In Silesia a live cock is presented to the master on a plate. The harvest-supper is called Harvest-cock, Stubble-cock, etc., and a chief dish at it, at least in some places, is a cock. If a waggoner upsets a harvest-waggon, it is said that "he has spilt the Harvest-cock," and he loses the cock, that is, the harvest-supper. The harvest-waggon, with the figure of the cock on it, is driven round the farmhouse before it is taken to the barn. Then the cock is nailed over or at the side of the house-door, or on the gable, and remains there till next harvest. In East Friesland the person who gives the last stroke at threshing is called the Clucking-hen, and grain is strewed before him as if he were a hen.

Again, the corn-spirit is killed in the form of a cock. In parts of Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Picardy the reapers place a live cock in the corn which is to be cut last, and chase it over the field, or bury it up to the neck in the ground; afterwards they strike off its head with a sickle or scythe. In many parts of Westphalia, when the harvesters bring the wooden cock to the farmer, he gives them a

live cock, which they kill with whips or sticks, or behead with an old sword, or throw into the barn to the girls, or give to the mistress to cook. It the Harvest-cock has not been spilt—that is, if no waggon has been upset—the harvesters have the right to kill the farmyard cock by throwing stones at it or beheading it. Where this custom has fallen into disuse, it is still common for the farmer's wife to make cockie-leekie for the harvesters, and to show them the head of the cock which has been killed for the soup. In the neighbourhood of Klausenburg, Transylvania, a cock is buried on the harvest-field in the earth, so that only its head appears. A young man then takes a scythe and cuts off the cock's head at a single sweep. If he fails to do this, he is called the Red Cock for a whole year, and people fear that next year's crop will be bad. Near Udvarhely, in Transylvania, a live cock is bound up in the last sheaf and killed with a spit. It is then skinned. The flesh is thrown away, but the skin and feathers are kept till next year; and in spring the grain from the last sheaf is mixed with the feathers of the cock and scattered on the field which is to be tilled. Nothing could set in a clearer light the identification of the cock with the spirit of the corn. By being tied up in the last sheaf and killed, the cock is identified with the corn, and its death with the cutting of the corn. By keeping its feathers till spring, then mixing them with the seed-corn taken from the very sheaf in which the bird had been bound, and scattering the feathers together with the seed over the field, the identity of the bird with the corn is again emphasised, and its quickening and fertilising power, as an embodiment of the corn-spirit, is intimated in the plainest manner. Thus the corn-spirit, in the form of a cock, is killed at harvest, but rises to fresh life and activity in spring. Again, the equivalence of the cock to the corn is expressed, hardly less plainly, in the custom of burying the bird in the ground, and cutting off its head (like the ears of corn) with the scythe.

§ 4. *The Corn-spirit as a Hare.*—Another common embodiment of the corn-spirit is the hare. In Galloway the reaping of the last standing corn is called "cutting the Hare." The mode of cutting it is as follows. When the rest of the corn has been reaped, a handful is left standing to form the Hare. It is divided into three parts and plaited, and the ears are tied in a knot. The reapers then retire a few yards and each throws his or her sickle in turn at the Hare to cut it down. It must be cut below the knot, and the reapers continue to throw their sickles at it, one after the other, until one of them succeeds in severing the stalks below the knot. The Hare is then carried home and given to a maidservant in the kitchen, who places it over the kitchen-door on the inside. Sometimes the Hare used to be thus kept till the next harvest. In the parish of Minnigaff, when the Hare was cut, the unmarried reapers ran home with all speed, and the one who arrived first was the first to be married. In Germany also one of the names for the last sheaf is the Hare. Thus in some parts of Anhalt, when the corn has been reaped and only a few stalks are

left standing, they say, "The Hare will soon come," or the reapers cry to each other, "Look how the Hare comes jumping out." In East Prussia they say that the Hare sits in the last patch of standing corn, and must be chased out by the last reaper. The reapers hurry with their work, each being anxious not to have "to chase out the Hare"; for the man who does so, that is, who cuts the last corn, is much laughed at. At Aurich, as we have seen, an expression for cutting the last corn is "to cut off the Hare's tail." "He is killing the Hare" is commonly said of the man who cuts the last corn in Germany, Sweden, Holland, France, and Italy. In Norway the man who is thus said to "kill the Hare" must give "hare's blood," in the form of brandy, to his fellows to drink. In Lesbos, when the reapers are at work in two neighbouring fields, each party tries to finish first in order to drive the Hare into their neighbour's field; the reapers who succeed in doing so believe that next year the crop will be better. A small sheaf of corn is made up and kept beside the holy picture till next harvest.

§ 5. *The Corn-spirit as a Cat.*—Again, the corn-spirit sometimes takes the form of a cat. Near Kiel children are warned not to go into the corn-fields because "the Cat sits there." In the Eisenach Oberland they are told "the Corn-cat will come and fetch you," "the Corn-cat goes in the corn." In some parts of Silesia at mowing the last corn they say, "The Cat is caught"; and at threshing, the man who gives the last stroke is called the Cat. In the neighbourhood of Lyons the last sheaf and the harvest-supper are both called the Cat. About Vesoul when they cut the last corn they say, "We have the Cat by the tail." At Briançon, in Dauphiné, at the beginning of reaping, a cat is decked out with ribbons, flowers, and ears of corn. It is called the Cat of the ball-skin (*le chat de peau de balle*). If a reaper is wounded at his work, they make the cat lick the wound. At the close of the reaping the cat is again decked out with ribbons and ears of corn; then they dance and make merry. When the dance is over the girls solemnly strip the cat of its finery. At Grüneberg, in Silesia, the reaper who cuts the last corn goes by the name of the Tom-cat. He is enveloped in rye-stalks and green withes, and is furnished with a long plaited tail. Sometimes as a companion he has a man similarly dressed, who is called the (female) Cat. Their duty is to run after people whom they see and to beat them with a long stick. Near Amiens the expression for finishing the harvest is, "They are going to kill the Cat"; and when the last corn is cut they kill a cat in the farmyard. At threshing, in some parts of France, a live cat is placed under the last bundle of corn to be threshed, and is struck dead with the flails. Then on Sunday it is roasted and eaten as a holiday dish. In the Vosges Mountains the close of haymaking or harvest is called "catching the cat," "killing the dog," or more rarely "catching the hare." The cat, the dog, or the hare is said to be fat or lean according as the crop is good or bad. The man who cuts the last handful of hay or of wheat is said to catch the cat or the hare or to kill the dog.

§ 6. *The Corn-spirit as a Goat.*—Further, the corn-spirit often appears in the form of a goat. In some parts of Prussia, when the corn bends before the wind, they say, "The Goats are chasing each other," "the wind is driving the Goats through the corn," "the Goats are browsing there," and they expect a very good harvest. Again they say, "The Oats-goat is sitting in the oats-field," "the Corn-goat is sitting in the rye-field." Children are warned not to go into the corn-fields to pluck the blue corn-flowers, or amongst the beans to pluck pods, because the Rye-goat, the Corn-goat, the Oats-goat, or the Bean-goat is sitting or lying there, and will carry them away or kill them. When a harvester is taken sick or lags behind his fellows at their work, they call out, "The Harvest-goat has pushed him," "he has been pushed by the Corn-goat." In the neighbourhood of Braunsberg (East Prussia) at binding the oats every harvester makes haste "lest the Corn-goat push him." At Oefoten, in Norway, each reaper has his allotted patch to reap. When a reaper in the middle has not finished reaping his piece after his neighbours have finished theirs, they say of him, "He remains on the island." And if the laggard is a man, they imitate the cry with which they call a he-goat; if a woman, the cry with which they call a she-goat. Near Straubing, in Lower Bavaria, it is said of the man who cuts the last corn that "he has the Corn-goat, or the Wheat-goat, or the Oats-goat," according to the crop. Moreover, two horns are set up on the last heap of corn, and it is called "the horned Goat." At Kreutzburg, East Prussia, they call out to the woman who is binding the last sheaf, "The Goat is sitting in the sheaf." At Gablingen, in Swabia, when the last field of oats upon a farm is being reaped, the reapers carve a goat out of wood. Ears of oats are inserted in its nostrils and mouth, and it is adorned with garlands of flowers. It is set up on the field and called the Oats-goat. When the reaping approaches an end, each reaper hastens to finish his piece first; he who is the last to finish gets the Oats-goat. Again, the last sheaf is itself called the Goat. Thus, in the valley of the Wiesent, Bavaria, the last sheaf bound on the field is called the Goat, and they have a proverb, "The field must bear a goat." At Spachbrücken, in Hesse, the last handful of corn which is cut is called the Goat, and the man who cuts it is much ridiculed. At Dürrenbüchig and about Mosbach in Baden the last sheaf is also called the Goat. Sometimes the last sheaf is made up in the form of a goat, and they say, "The Goat is sitting in it." Again, the person who cuts or binds the last sheaf is called the Goat. Thus, in parts of Mecklenburg they call out to the woman who binds the last sheaf, "You are the Harvest-goat." Near Uelzen, in Hanover, the harvest festival begins with "the bringing of the Harvest-goat"; that is, the woman who bound the last sheaf is wrapt in straw, crowned with a harvest-wreath, and brought in a wheel-barrow to the village, where a round dance takes place. About Luneburg, also, the woman who binds the last corn is decked with a crown of corn-ears and is called the Corn-goat. At Münzesheim in Baden the reaper who cuts the last handful

of corn or oats is called the Corn-goat or the Oats-goat. In the Canton St. Gall, Switzerland, the person who cuts the last handful of corn on the field, or drives the last harvest-waggon to the barn, is called the Corn-goat or the Rye-goat, or simply the Goat. In the Canton Thurgau he is called Corn-goat; like a goat he has a bell hung round his neck, is led in triumph, and drenched with liquor. In parts of Styria, also, the man who cuts the last corn is called Corn-goat, Oats-goat, or the like. As a rule, the man who thus gets the name of Corn-goat has to bear it a whole year till the next harvest.

According to one view, the corn-spirit, who has been caught in the form of a goat or otherwise, lives in the farmhouse or barn over winter. Thus, each farm has its own embodiment of the corn-spirit. But, according to another view, the corn-spirit is the genius or deity, not of the corn of one farm only, but of all the corn. Hence when the corn on one farm is all cut, he flees to another where there is still corn left standing. This idea is brought out in a harvest-custom which was formerly observed in Skye. The farmer who first finished reaping sent a man or woman with a sheaf to a neighbouring farmer who had not finished; the latter in his turn, when he had finished, sent on the sheaf to his neghbour who was still reaping; and so the sheaf made the round of the farms till all the corn was cut. The sheaf was called the *goabbir bhacagh,* that is, the Cripple Goat. The custom appears not to be extinct at the present day, for it was reported from Skye not very many years ago. The corn-spirit was probably thus represented as lame because he had been crippled by the cutting of the corn. Sometimes the old woman who brings home the last sheaf must limp on one foot.

But sometimes the corn-spirit, in the form of a goat, is believed to be slain on the harvest-field by the sickle or scythe. Thus, in the neighbourhood of Bernkastel, on the Moselle, the reapers determine by lot the order in which they shall follow each other. The first is called the fore-reaper, the last the tail-bearer. If a reaper overtakes the man in front he reaps past him, bending round so as to leave the slower reaper in a patch by himself. This patch is called the Goat; and the man for whom "the Goat is cut" in this way, is laughed and jeered at by his fellows for the rest of the day. When the tail-bearer cuts the last ears of corn, it is said, "He is cutting the Goat's neck off." In the neighbourhood of Grenoble, before the end of the reaping, a live goat is adorned with flowers and ribbons and allowed to run about the field. The reapers chase it and try to catch it. When it is caught, the farmer's wife holds it fast while the farmer cuts off its head. The goat's flesh serves to furnish the harvest-supper. A piece of the flesh is pickled and kept till the next harvest, when another goat is killed. Then all the harvesters eat of the flesh. On the same day the skin of the goat is made into a cloak, which the farmer, who works with his men, must always wear at harvest-time if rain or bad weather sets in. But if a reaper gets pains in his back, the farmer gives him the goat-skin to wear. The reason for this seems to be that the pains in the

back, being inflicted by the corn-spirit, can also be healed by it. Similarly, we saw that elsewhere, when a reaper is wounded at reaping, a cat, as the representative of the corn-spirit, is made to lick the wound. Esthonian reapers of the island of Mon think that the man who cuts the first ears of corn at harvest will get pains in his back, probably because the corn-spirit is believed to resent especially the first wound; and, in order to escape pains in the back, Saxon reapers in Transylvania gird their loins with the first handful of ears which they cut. Here, again, the corn-spirit is applied to for healing or protection, but in his original vegetable form, not in the form of a goat or a cat.

Further, the corn-spirit under the form of a goat is sometimes conceived as lurking among the cut corn in the barn, till he is driven from it by the threshing-flail. Thus in Baden the last sheaf to be threshed is called the Corn-goat, the Spelt-goat, or the Oats-goat according to the kind of grain. Again, near Marktl, in Upper Bavaria, the sheaves are called Straw-goats or simply Goats. They are laid in a great heap on the open field and threshed by two rows of men standing opposite each other, who, as they ply their flails, sing a song in which they say that they see the Straw-goat amongst the corn-stalks. The last Goat, that is, the last sheaf, is adorned with a wreath of violets and other flowers and with cakes strung together. It is placed right in the middle of the heap. Some of the threshers rush at it and tear the best of it out; others lay on with their flails so recklessly that heads are sometimes broken. At Oberinntal, in the Tyrol, the last thresher is called Goat. So at Haselberg, in West Bohemia, the man who gives the last stroke at threshing oats is called the Oats-goat. At Tettnang, in Würtemburg, the thresher who gives the last stroke to the last bundle of corn before it is turned goes by the name of the He-goat, and it is said, "He has driven the He-goat away." The person who, after the bundle has been turned, gives the last stroke of all, is called the She-goat. In this custom it is implied that the corn is inhabited by a pair of corn-spirits, male and female.

Further, the corn-spirit, captured in the form of a goat at threshing, is passed on to a neighbour whose threshing is not yet finished. In Franche Comté, as soon as the threshing is over, the young people set up a straw figure of a goat on the farmyard of a neighbour who is still threshing. He must give them wine or money in return. At Ellwangen, in Würtemburg, the effigy of a goat is made out of the last bundle of corn at threshing; four sticks form its legs, and two its horns. The man who gives the last stroke with the flail must carry the Goat to the barn of a neighbour who is still threshing and throw it down on the floor; if he is caught in the act, they tie the Goat on his back. A similar custom is observed at Indersdorf, in Upper Bavaria; the man who throws the straw Goat into the neighbour's barn imitates the bleating of a goat; if they catch him, they blacken his face and tie the Goat on his back. At Saverne, in Alsace, when

a farmer is a week or more behind his neighbours with his threshing, they set a real stuffed goat or fox before his door.

Sometimes the spirit of the corn in goat form is believed to be killed at threshing. In the district of Traunstein, Upper Bavaria, they think that the Oats-goat is in the last sheaf of oats. He is represented by an old rake set up on end, with an old pot for a head. The children are then told to kill the Oats-goat.

§ 7. *The Corn-spirit as a Bull, Cow, or Ox.*—Another form which the corn-spirit often assumes is that of a bull, cow, or ox. When the wind sweeps over the corn they say at Conitz, in West Prussia, "The Steer is running in the corn"; when the corn is thick and strong in one spot, they say in some parts of East Prussia, "The Bull is lying in the corn." When a harvester has overstrained and lamed himself, they say in the Graudenz district of West Prussia, "The Bull pushed him"; in Lorraine they say, "He has the Bull." The meaning of both expressions is that he has unwittingly lighted upon the divine corn-spirit, who has punished the profane intruder with lameness. So near Chambéry when a reaper wounds himself with his sickle, it is said that he has "the wound of the Ox." In the district of Bunzlau (Silesia) the last sheaf is sometimes made into the shape of a horned ox, stuffed with tow and wrapt in corn-ears. This figure is called the Old Man. In some parts of Bohemia the last sheaf is made up in human form and called the Buffalo-bull. These cases show a confusion of the human with the animal shape of the corn-spirit. The confusion is like that of killing a wether under the name of a wolf. All over Swabia the last bundle of corn on the field is called the Cow; the man who cuts the last ears "has the Cow," and is himself called Cow or Barley-cow or Oats-cow, according to the crop; at the harvest-supper he gets a nosegay of flowers and corn-ears and a more liberal allowance of drink than the rest. But he is teased and laughed at; so no one likes to be the Cow. The Cow was sometimes represented by the figure of a woman made out of ears of corn and corn-flowers. It was carried to the farmhouse by the man who had cut the last handful of corn. The children ran after him and the neighbours turned out to laugh at him, till the farmer took the Cow from him. Here again the confusion between the human and the animal form of the corn-spirit is apparent. In various parts of Switzerland the reaper who cuts the last ears of corn is called Wheat-cow, Corn-cow, Oats-cow, or Corn-steer, and is the butt of many a joke. On the other hand, in the district of Rosenheim, Upper Bavaria, when a farmer is later of getting in his harvest than his neighbours, they set up on his land a Straw-bull, as it is called. This is a gigantic figure of a bull made of stubble on a framework of wood and adorned with flowers and leaves. Attached to it is a label on which are scrawled doggerel verses in ridicule of the man on whose land the Straw-bull is set up.

Again, the corn-spirit in the form of a bull or ox is killed on the harvest-field at the close of the reaping. At Pouilly, near Dijon,

when the last ears of corn are about to be cut, an ox adorned with ribbons, flowers, and ears of corn is led all round the field, followed by the whole troop of reapers dancing. Then a man disguised as the Devil cuts the last ears of corn and immediately slaughters the ox. Part of the flesh of the animal is eaten at the harvest-supper; part is pickled and kept till the first day of sowing in spring. At Pont à Mousson and elsewhere on the evening of the last day of reaping, a calf adorned with flowers and ears of corn is led thrice round the farmyard, being allured by a bait or driven by men with sticks, or conducted by the farmer's wife with a rope. The calf chosen for this ceremony is the calf which was born first on the farm in the spring of the year. It is followed by all the reapers with their tools. Then it is allowed to run free; the reapers chase it, and whoever catches it is called King of the Calf. Lastly, it is solemnly killed; at Lunéville the man who acts as butcher is the Jewish merchant of the village.

Sometimes again the corn-spirit hides himself amongst the cut corn in the barn to reappear in bull or cow form at threshing. Thus at Wurmlingen, in Thüringen, the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is called the Cow, or rather the Barley-cow, Oats-cow, Peas-cow, or the like, according to the crop. He is entirely enveloped in straw; his head is surmounted by sticks in imitation of horns, and two lads lead him by ropes to the well to drink. On the way thither he must low like a cow, and for a long time afterwards he goes by the name of the Cow. At Obermedlingen, in Swabia, when the threshing draws near an end, each man is careful to avoid giving the last stroke. He who does give it "gets the Cow," which is a straw figure dressed in an old ragged petticoat, hood, and stockings. It is tied on his back with a straw-rope; his face is blackened, and being bound with straw-ropes to a wheelbarrow he is wheeled round the village. Here, again, we meet with that confusion between the human and animal shape of the corn-spirit which we have noted in other customs. In Canton Schaffhausen the man who threshes the last corn is called the Cow; in Canton Thurgau, the Corn-bull; in Canton Zurich, the Thresher-cow. In the last-mentioned district he is wrapt in straw and bound to one of the trees in the orchard. At Arad, in Hungary, the man who gives the last stroke at threshing is enveloped in straw and a cow's hide with the horns attached to it. At Pessnitz, in the district of Dresden, the man who gives the last stroke with the flail is called Bull. He must make a straw-man and set it up before a neighbour's window. Here, apparently, as in so many cases, the corn-spirit is passed on to a neighbour who has not finished threshing. So at Herbrechtingen, in Thüringen, the effigy of a ragged old woman is flung into the barn of the farmer who is last with his threshing. The man who throws it in cries, "There is the Cow for you." If the threshers catch him they detain him over night and punish him by keeping him from the harvest-supper. In these latter customs the confusion between the human and the animal shape of the corn-spirit meets us again.

Further, the corn-spirit in bull form is sometimes believed to be killed at threshing. At Auxerre, in threshing the last bundle of corn, they call out twelve times, "We are killing the Bull." In the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, where a butcher kills an ox on the field immediately after the close of the reaping, it is said of the man who gives the last stroke at threshing that "he has killed the Bull." At Chambéry the last sheaf is called the sheaf of the Young Ox, and a race takes place to it in which all the reapers join. When the last stroke is given at threshing they say that "the Ox is killed"; and immediately thereupon a real ox is slaughtered by the reaper who cut the last corn. The flesh of the ox is eaten by the threshers at supper.

We have seen that sometimes the young corn-spirit, whose task it is to quicken the corn of the coming year, is believed to be born as a Corn-baby on the harvest-field. Similarly in Berry the young corn-spirit is sometimes supposed to be born on the field in calf form; for when a binder has not rope enough to bind all the corn in sheaves, he puts aside the wheat that remains over and imitates the lowing of a cow. The meaning is that "the sheaf has given birth to a calf." In Puy-de-Dôme when a binder cannot keep up with the reaper whom he or she follows, they say "He (or she) is giving birth to the Calf." In some parts of Prussia, in similar circumstances, they call out to the woman, "The Bull is coming," and imitate the bellowing of a bull. In these cases the woman is conceived as the Corn-cow or old corn-spirit, while the supposed calf is the Corn-calf or young corn-spirit. In some parts of Austria a mythical calf (*Muhkälbchen*) is believed to be seen amongst the sprouting corn in spring and to push the children; when the corn waves in the wind they say, "The Calf is going about." Clearly, as Mannhardt observes, this calf of the spring-time is the same animal which is afterwards believed to be killed at reaping.

§ 8. *The Corn-spirit as a Horse or Mare.*—Sometimes the corn-spirit appears in the shape of a horse or mare. Between Kalw and Stuttgart, when the corn bends before the wind, they say, "There runs the Horse." At Bohlingen, near Radolfzell in Baden, the last sheaf of oats is called the Oats-stallion. In Hertfordshire, at the end of the reaping, there is or used to be observed a ceremony called "crying the Mare." The last blades of corn left standing on the field are tied together and called the Mare. The reapers stand at a distance and throw their sickles at it; he who cuts it through "has the prize, with acclamations and good cheer." After it is cut the reapers cry thrice with a loud voice, "I have her!" Others answer thrice, "What have you?" —"A Mare! a Mare! a Mare!"—"Whose is she?" is next asked thrice. "A. B.'s," naming the owner thrice. "Whither will you send her?"—"To C. D.," naming some neighbour who has not reaped all his corn. In this custom the corn-spirit in the form of a mare is passed on from a farm where the corn is all cut to another farm where it is still standing, and where therefore the corn-spirit may be

supposed naturally to take refuge. In Shropshire the custom is similar. The farmer who finishes his harvest last, and who therefore cannot send the Mare to any one else, is said "to keep her all winter." The mocking offer of the Mare to a laggard neighbour was sometimes responded to by a mocking acceptance of her help. Thus an old man told an inquirer, "While we wun at supper, a mon cumm'd wi' a autar [halter] to fatch her away." At one place a real mare used to be sent, but the man who rode her was subjected to some rough treatment at the farmhouse to which he paid his unwelcome visit.

In the neighbourhood of Lille the idea of the corn-spirit in horse form is clearly preserved. When a harvester grows weary at his work, it is said, "He has the fatigue of the Horse." The first sheaf, called the "Cross of the Horse," is placed on a cross of boxwood in the barn, and the youngest horse on the farm must tread on it. The reapers dance round the last blades of corn, crying, "See the remains of the Horse." The sheaf made out of these last blades is given to the youngest horse of the parish (*commune*) to eat. This youngest horse of the parish clearly represents, as Mannhardt says, the corn-spirit of the following year, the Corn-foal, which absorbs the spirit of the old Corn-horse by eating the last corn cut; for, as usual, the old corn-spirit takes his final refuge in the last sheaf. The thresher of the last sheaf is said to "beat the Horse."

§ 9. *The Corn-spirit as a Pig* (*Boar or Sow*).—The last animal embodiment of the corn-spirit which we shall notice is the pig (boar or sow). In Thüringen, when the wind sets the young corn in motion, they sometimes say, "The Boar is rushing through the corn." Amongst the Esthonians of the island of Oesel the last sheaf is called the Rye-boar, and the man who gets it is saluted with a cry of "You have the Rye-boar on your back!" In reply he strikes up a song, in which he prays for plenty. At Kohlerwinkel, near Augsburg, at the close of the harvest, the last bunch of standing corn is cut down, stalk by stalk, by all the reapers in turn. He who cuts the last stalk "gets the Sow," and is laughed at. In other Swabian villages also the man who cuts the last corn "has the Sow," or "has the Rye-sow." At Bohlingen, near Radolfzell in Baden, the last sheaf is called the Rye-sow or the Wheat-sow, according to the crop; and at Röhrenbach in Baden the person who brings the last armful for the last sheaf is called the Corn-sow or the Oats-sow. At Friedingen, in Swabia, the thresher who gives the last stroke is called Sow—Barley-sow, Corn-sow, or the like, according to the crop. At Onstmettingen the man who gives the last stroke at threshing "has the Sow"; he is often bound up in a sheaf and dragged by a rope along the ground. And, generally, in Swabia the man who gives the last stroke with the flail is called Sow. He may, however, rid himself of this invidious distinction by passing on to a neighbour the straw-rope, which is the badge of his position as Sow. So he goes to a house and throws the straw-rope into it, crying, "There, I bring you the Sow." All the inmates give chase; and if they catch him they beat him, shut him

up for several hours in the pig-sty, and oblige him to take the "Sow" away again. In various parts of Upper Bavaria the man who gives the last stroke at threshing must "carry the Pig"—that is, either a straw effigy of a pig or merely a bundle of straw-ropes. This he carries to a neighbouring farm where the threshing is not finished, and throws it into the barn. If the threshers catch him they handle him roughly, beating him, blackening or dirtying his face, throwing him into filth, binding the Sow on his back, and so on; if the bearer of the Sow is a woman they cut off her hair. At the harvest supper or dinner the man who "carried the Pig" gets one or more dumplings made in the form of pigs. When the dumplings are served up by the maid-servant, all the people at table cry "Süz, süz, süz!" that being the cry used in calling pigs. Sometimes after dinner the man who "carried the Pig" has his face blackened, and is set on a cart and drawn round the village by his fellows, followed by a crowd crying "Süz, süz, süz!" as if they were calling swine. Sometimes, after being wheeled round the village, he is flung on the dunghill.

Again, the corn-spirit in the form of a pig plays his part at sowing-time as well as at harvest. At Neuautz, in Courland, when barley is sown for the first time in the year, the farmer's wife boils the chine of a pig along with the tail, and brings it to the sower on the field. He eats of it, but cuts off the tail and sticks it in the field; it is believed that the ears of corn will then grow as long as the tail. Here the pig is the corn-spirit, whose fertilising power is sometimes supposed to lie especially in his tail. As a pig he is put in the ground at sowing-time, and as a pig he reappears amongst the ripe corn at harvest. For amongst the neighbouring Esthonians, as we have seen, the last sheaf is called the Rye-boar. Somewhat similar customs are observed in Germany. In the Salza district, near Meiningen, a certain bone in the pig is called "the Jew on the winnowing-fan." The flesh of this bone is boiled on Shrove Tuesday, but the bone is put amongst the ashes which the neighbours exchange as presents on St. Peter's Day (the twenty-second of February), and then mix with the seed-corn. In the whole of Hesse, Meiningen, and other districts, people eat pea-soup with dried pig-ribs on Ash Wednesday or Candlemas. The ribs are then collected and hung in the room till sowing-time, when they are inserted in the sown field or in the seed-bag amongst the flax seed. This is thought to be an infallible specific against earth-fleas and moles, and to cause the flax to grow well and tall.

But the idea of the corn-spirit as embodied in pig form is nowhere more clearly expressed than in the Scandinavian custom of the Yule Boar. In Sweden and Denmark at Yule (Christmas) it is the custom to bake a loaf in the form of a boar-pig. This is called the Yule Boar. The corn of the last sheaf is often used to make it. All through Yule the Yule Boar stands on the table. Often it is kept till the sowing-time in spring, when part of it is mixed with the seed-corn and part given to the ploughman and plough-horses or plough-oxen to eat, in the expectation of a good harvest. In this custom

the corn-spirit, immanent in the last sheaf, appears at midwinter in the form of a boar made from the corn of the last sheaf; and his quickening influence on the corn is shown by mixing part of the Yule Boar with the seed-corn, and giving part of it to the ploughman and his cattle to eat. Similarly we saw that the Corn-wolf makes his appearance at mid-winter, the time when the year begins to verge towards spring. Formerly a real boar was sacrificed at Christmas, and apparently also a man in the character of the Yule Boar. This, at least, may perhaps be inferred from a Christmas custom still observed in Sweden. A man is wrapt up in a skin, and carries a wisp of straw in his mouth, so that the projecting straws look like the bristles of a boar. A knife is brought, and an old woman, with her face blackened, pretends to sacrifice him.

On Christman Eve in some parts of the Esthonian island of Oesel they bake a long cake with the two ends turned up. It is called the Christmas Boar, and stands on the table till the morning of New Year's Day, when it is distributed among the cattle. In other parts of the island the Christmas Boar is not a cake but a little pig born in March, which the housewife fattens secretly, often without the knowledge of the other members of the family. On Christmas Eve the little pig is secretly killed, then roasted in the oven, and set on the table standing on all fours, where it remains in this posture for several days. In other parts of the island, again, though the Christmas cake has neither the name nor the shape of a boar, it is kept till the New Year, when half of it is divided among all the members and all the quadrupeds of the family. The other half of the cake is kept till sowing-time comes round, when it is similarly distributed in the morning among human beings and beasts. In other parts of Esthonia, again, the Christmas Boar, as it is called, is baked of the first rye cut at harvest; it has a conical shape and a cross is impressed on it with a pig's bone or a key, or three dints are made in it with a buckle or a piece of charcoal. It stands with a light beside it on the table all through the festal season. On New Year's Day and Epiphany, before sunrise, a little of the cake is crumbled with salt and given to the cattle. The rest is kept till the day when the cattle are driven out to pasture for the first time in spring. It is then put in the herdsman's bag, and at evening is divided among the cattle to guard them from magic and harm. In some places the Christmas Boar is partaken of by farm-servants and cattle at the time of the barley sowing, for the purpose of thereby producing a heavier crop.

§ 10. *On the Animal Embodiments of the Corn-spirit.*—So much for the animal embodiments of the corn-spirit as they are presented to us in the folk-customs of Northern Europe. These customs bring out clearly the sacramental character of the harvest-supper. The corn-spirit is conceived as embodied in an animal; this divine animal is slain, and its flesh and blood are partaken of by the harvesters. Thus the cock, the hare, the cat, the goat, and the ox are eaten sacramentally by the harvester, and the pig is eaten sacramentally

by ploughmen in spring. Again, as a substitute for the real flesh of the divine being, bread or dumplings are made in his image and eaten sacramentally; thus, pig-shaped dumplings are eaten by the harvesters, and loaves made in boar-shape (the Yule Boar) are eaten in spring by the ploughman and his cattle.

The reader has probably remarked the complete parallelism between the conceptions of the corn-spirit in human and in animal form. The parallel may be here briefly resumed. When the corn waves in the wind it is said either that the Corn-mother or that the Corn-wolf, etc., is passing through the corn. Children are warned against straying in corn-fields either because the Corn-mother or because the Corn-wolf, etc., is there. In the last corn cut or the last sheaf threshed either the Corn-mother or the Corn-wolf, etc., is supposed to be present. The last sheaf is itself called either the Corn-mother or the Corn-wolf, etc., and is made up in the shape either of a woman or of a wolf, etc. The person who cuts, binds, or threshes the last sheaf is called either the Old Woman or the Wolf, etc., according to the name bestowed on the sheaf itself. As in some places a sheaf made in human form and called the Maiden, the Mother of the Maize, etc., is kept from one harvest to the next in order to secure a continuance of the corn-spirit's blessing, so in some places the Harvest-cock and in others the flesh of the goat is kept for a similar purpose from one harvest to the next. As in some places the grain taken from the Corn-mother is mixed with the seed-corn in spring to make the crop abundant, so in some places the feathers of the cock, and in Sweden the Yule Boar, are kept till spring and mixed with the seed-corn for a like purpose. As part of the Corn-mother or Maiden is given to the cattle at Christmas or to the horses at the first ploughing, so part of the Yule Boar is given to the ploughing horses or oxen in spring. Lastly, the death of the corn-spirit is represented by killing or pretending to kill either his human or his animal representative; and the worshippers partake sacramentally either of the actual body and blood of the representative of the divinity, or of bread made in his likeness.

Other animal forms assumed by the corn-spirit are the fox, stag, roe, sheep, bear, ass, mouse, quail, stork, swan, and kite. If it is asked why the corn-spirit should be thought to appear in the form of an animal and of so many different animals, we may reply that to primitive man the simple appearance of an animal or bird among the corn is probably enough to suggest a mysterious link between the creature and the corn; and when we remember that in the old days, before fields were fenced in, all kinds of animals must have been free to roam over them, we need not wonder that the corn-spirit should have been identified even with large animals like the horse and cow, which nowadays could not, except by a rare accident, be found straying in an English corn-field. This explanation applies with peculiar force to the very common case in which the animal embodiment of the corn-spirit is believed to lurk in the last standing corn. For at harvest a number

of wild animals, such as hares, rabbits, and partridges, are commonly driven by the progress of the reaping into the last patch of standing corn, and make their escape from it as it is being cut down. So regularly does this happen that reapers and others often stand round the last patch of corn armed with sticks or guns, with which they kill the animals as they dart out of their last refuge among the stalks. Now, primitive man, to whom magical changes of shape seem perfectly credible, finds it most natural that the spirit of the corn, driven from his home in the ripe grain, should make his escape in the form of the animal which is seen to rush out of the last patch of corn as it falls under the scythe of the reaper. Thus the identification of the corn-spirit with an animal is analogous to the identification of him with a passing stranger. As the sudden appearance of a stranger near the harvest-field or threshing-floor is, to the primitive mind, enough to identify him as the spirit of the corn escaping from the cut or threshed corn, so the sudden appearance of an animal issuing from the cut corn is enough to identify it with the corn-spirit escaping from his ruined home. The two identifications are so analogous that they can hardly be dissociated in any attempt to explain them. Those who look to some other principle than the one here suggested for the explanation of the latter identification are bound to show that their theory covers the former identification also.

CHAPTER XLIX

ANCIENT DEITIES OF VEGETATION AS ANIMALS

§ 1. *Dionysus, the Goat and the Bull.*—However we may explain it, the fact remains that in peasant folk-lore the corn-spirit is very commonly conceived and represented in animal form. May not this fact explain the relation in which certain animals stood to the ancient deities of vegetation, Dionysus, Demeter, Adonis, Attis, and Osiris?

To begin with Dionysus. We have seen that he was represented sometimes as a goat and sometimes as a bull. As a goat he can hardly be separated from the minor divinities, the Pans, Satyrs, and Silenuses, all of whom are closely associated with him and are represented more or less completely in the form of goats. Thus, Pan was regularly portrayed in sculpture and painting with the face and legs of a goat. The Satyrs were depicted with pointed goat-ears, and sometimes with sprouting horns and short tails. They were sometimes spoken of simply as goats; and in the drama their parts were played by men dressed in goatskins. Silenus is represented in art clad in a goatskin. Further, the Fauns, the Italian counterpart of the Greek Pans and Satyrs, are described as being half goats, with goat-feet and goat-horns. Again, all these minor goat-formed divinities partake more or less clearly of the character of woodland

deities. Thus, Pan was called by the Arcadians the Lord of the Wood. The Silenuses kept company with the tree-nymphs. The Fauns are expressly designated as woodland deities; and their character as such is still further brought out by their association, or even identification, with Silvanus and the Silvanuses, who, as their name of itself indicates, are spirits of the woods. Lastly, the association of the Satyrs with the Silenuses, Fauns, and Silvanuses, proves that the Satyrs also were woodland deities. These goat-formed spirits of the woods have their counterparts in the folk-lore of Northern Europe. Thus, the Russian wood-spirits, called *Ljeschie* (from *ljes*, "wood"), are believed to appear partly in human shape, but with the horns, ears, and legs of goats. The *Ljeschi* can alter his stature at pleasure; when he walks in the wood he is as tall as the trees; when he walks in the meadows he is no higher than the grass. Some of the *Ljeschie* are spirits of the corn as well as of the wood; before harvest they are as tall as the corn-stalks, but after it they shrink to the height of the stubble. This brings out—what we have remarked before—the close connexion between tree-spirits and corn-spirits, and shows how easily the former may melt into the latter. Similarly the Fauns, though wood-spirits, were believed to foster the growth of the crops. We have already seen how often the corn-spirit is represented in folk-custom as a goat. On the whole, then, as Mannhardt argues, the Pans, Satyrs, and Fauns perhaps belong to a widely diffused class of wood-spirits conceived in goat-form. The fondness of goats for straying in woods and nibbling the bark of trees, to which indeed they are most destructive, is an obvious and perhaps sufficient reason why wood-spirits should so often be supposed to take the form of goats. The inconsistency of a god of vegetation subsisting upon the vegetation which he personifies is not one to strike the primitive mind. Such inconsistencies arise when the deity, ceasing to be immanent in the vegetation, comes to be regarded as its owner or lord; for the idea of owning the vegetation naturally leads to that of subsisting on it. Sometimes the corn-spirit, originally conceived as immanent in the corn, afterwards comes to be regarded as its owner, who lives on it and is reduced to poverty and want by being deprived of it. Hence he is often known as "the Poor Man" or "the Poor Woman." Occasionally the last sheaf is left standing on the field for "the Poor Old Woman" or for "the Old Rye-woman."

Thus the representation of wood-spirits in the form of goats appears to be both widespread and, to the primitive mind, natural. Therefore when we find, as we have done, that Dionysus—a tree-god—is sometimes represented in goat-form, we can hardly avoid concluding that this representation is simply a part of his proper character as a tree-god and is not to be explained by the fusion of two distinct and independent worships, in one of which he originally appeared as a tree-god and in the other as a goat.

Dionysus was also figured, as we have seen, in the shape of a bull. After what has gone before we are naturally led to expect that his

bull form must have been only another expression for his character as a deity of vegetation, especially as the bull is a common embodiment of the corn-spirit in Northern Europe; and the close association of Dionysus with Demeter and Persephone in the mysteries of Eleusis shows that he had at least strong agricultural affinities.

The probability of this view will be somewhat increased if it can be shown that in other rites than those of Dionysus the ancients slew an ox as a representative of the spirit of vegetation. This they appear to have done in the Athenian sacrifice known as "the murder of the ox" (*bouphonia*). It took place about the end of June or beginning of July, that is, about the time when the threshing is nearly over in Attica. According to tradition the sacrifice was instituted to procure a cessation of drought and dearth which had afflicted the land. The ritual was as follows. Barley mixed with wheat, or cakes made of them, were laid upon the bronze altar of Zeus Polieus on the Acropolis. Oxen were driven round the altar, and the ox which went up to the altar and ate the offering on it was sacrificed. The axe and knife with which the beast was slain had been previously wetted with water brought by maidens called "water-carriers." The weapons were then sharpened and handed to the butchers, one of whom felled the ox with the axe and another cut its throat with the knife. As soon as he had felled the ox, the former threw the axe from him and fled; and the man who cut the beast's throat apparently imitated his example. Meantime the ox was skinned and all present partook of its flesh. Then the hide was stuffed with straw and sewed up; next the stuffed animal was set on its feet and yoked to a plough as if it were ploughing. A trial then took place in an ancient law-court presided over by the King (as he was called) to determine who had murdered the ox. The maidens who had brought the water accused the men who had sharpened the axe and knife; the men who had sharpened the axe and knife blamed the men who had handed these implements to the butchers; the men who had handed the implements to the butchers blamed the butchers; and the butchers laid the blame on the axe and knife, which were accordingly found guilty, condemned, and cast into the sea.

The name of this sacrifice,—"the *murder* of the ox,"—the pains taken by each person who had a hand in the slaughter to lay the blame on some one else, together with the formal trial and punishment of the axe or knife or both, prove that the ox was here regarded not merely as a victim offered to a god, but as itself a sacred creature, the slaughter of which was sacrilege or murder. This is borne out by a statement of Varro that to kill an ox was formerly a capital crime in Attica. The mode of selecting the victim suggests that the ox which tasted the corn was viewed as the corn-deity taking possession of his own. This interpretation is supported by the following custom. In Beauce, in the district of Orleans, on the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth of April they make a straw man called "the great *mondard*." For they say that the old *mondard* is now dead and it is necessary to make a new

one. The straw man is carried in solemn procession up and down the village and at last is placed upon the oldest apple-tree. There he remains till the apples are gathered, when he is taken down and thrown into the water, or he is burned and his ashes cast into water. But the person who plucks the first fruit from the tree succeeds to the title of "the great *mondard*." Here the straw figure, called "the great *mondard*" and placed on the oldest apple-tree in spring, represents the spirit of the tree, who, dead in winter, revives when the apple-blossoms appear on the boughs. Thus the person who plucks the first fruit from the tree and thereby receives the name of "the great *mondard*" must be regarded as a representative of the tree-spirit. Primitive peoples are usually reluctant to taste the annual first-fruits of any crop, until some ceremony has been performed which makes it safe and pious for them to do so. The reason of this reluctance appears to be a belief that the first-fruits either belong to or actually contain a divinity. Therefore when a man or animal is seen boldly to appropriate the sacred first-fruits, he or it is naturally regarded as the divinity himself in human or animal form taking possession of his own. The time of the Athenian sacrifice, which fell about the close of the threshing, suggests that the wheat and barley laid upon the altar were a harvest offering; and the sacramental character of the subsequent repast—all partaking of the flesh of the divine animal—would make it parallel to the harvest-suppers of modern Europe, in which, as we have seen, the flesh of the animal which stands for the corn-spirit is eaten by the harvesters. Again, the tradition that the sacrifice was instituted in order to put an end to drought and famine is in favour of taking it as a harvest festival. The resurrection of the corn-spirit, enacted by setting up the stuffed ox and yoking it to the plough, may be compared with the resurrection of the tree-spirit in the person of his representative, the Wild Man.

The ox appears as a representative of the corn-spirit in other parts of the world. At Great Bassam, in Guinea, two oxen are slain annually to procure a good harvest. If the sacrifice is to be effectual, it is necessary that the oxen should weep. So all the women of the village sit in front of the beasts, chanting, "The ox will weep; yes, he will weep!" From time to time one of the women walks round the beasts, throwing manioc meal or palm wine upon them, especially into their eyes. When tears roll down from the eyes of the oxen, the people dance, singing, "The ox weeps! the ox weeps!" Then two men seize the tails of the beasts and cut them off at one blow. It is believed that a great misfortune will happen in the course of the year if the tails are not severed at one blow. The oxen are afterwards killed, and their flesh is eaten by the chiefs. Here the tears of the oxen, like those of the human victims amongst the Khonds and the Aztecs, are probably a rain-charm. We have already seen that the virtue of the corn-spirit, embodied in animal form, is sometimes supposed to reside in the tail, and that the last handful of corn is sometimes conceived as the tail of the corn-spirit. In the Mithraic religion this conception

is graphically set forth in some of the numerous sculptures which represent Mithras kneeling on the back of a bull and plunging a knife into its flank; for on certain of these monuments the tail of the bull ends in three stalks of corn, and in one of them corn-stalks instead of blood are seen issuing from the wound inflicted by the knife. Such representations certainly suggest that the bull, whose sacrifice appears to have formed a leading feature in the Mithraic ritual, was conceived, in one at least of its aspects, as an incarnation of the corn-spirit.

Still more clearly does the ox appear as a personification of the corn-spirit in a ceremony which is observed in all the provinces and districts of China to welcome the approach of spring. On the first day of spring, usually on the third or fourth of February, which is also the beginning of the Chinese New Year, the governor or prefect of the city goes in procession to the east gate of the city, and sacrifices to the Divine Husbandman, who is represented with a bull's head on the body of a man. A large effigy of an ox, cow, or buffalo has been prepared for the occasion, and stands outside of the east gate, with agricultural implements beside it. The figure is made of differently-coloured pieces of paper pasted on a framework either by a blind man or according to the directions of a necromancer. The colours of the paper prognosticate the character of the coming year; if red prevails, there will be many fires; if white, there will be floods and rain; and so with the other colours. The mandarins walk slowly round the ox, beating it severely at each step with rods of various hues. It is filled with five kinds of grain, which pour forth when the effigy is broken by the blows of the rods. The paper fragments are then set on fire, and a scramble takes place for the burning fragments, because the people believe that whoever gets one of them is sure to be fortunate throughout the year. A live buffalo is next killed, and its flesh is divided among the mandarins. According to one account, the effigy of the ox is made of clay, and, after being beaten by the governor, is stoned by the people till they break it in pieces, "from which they expect an abundant year." Here the corn-spirit appears to be plainly represented by the corn-filled ox, whose fragments may therefore be supposed to bring fertility with them.

On the whole we may perhaps conclude that both as a goat and as a bull Dionysus was essentially a god of vegetation. The Chinese and European customs which I have cited may perhaps shed light on the custom of rending a live bull or goat at the rites of Dionysus. The animal was torn in fragments, as the Khond victim was cut in pieces, in order that the worshippers might each secure a portion of the life-giving and fertilising influence of the god. The flesh was eaten raw as a sacrament, and we may conjecture that some of it was taken home to be buried in the fields, or otherwise employed so as to convey to the fruits of the earth the quickening influence of the god of vegetation. The resurrection of Dionysus, related in his myth, may have been enacted in his rites by stuffing and setting up the slain ox, as was done at the Athenian *bouphonia*.

§ 2. *Demeter, the Pig and the Horse.*—Passing next to the corn-goddess Demeter, and remembering that in European folk-lore the pig is a common embodiment of the corn-spirit, we may now ask whether the pig, which was so closely associated with Demeter, may not have been originally the goddess herself in animal form. The pig was sacred to her; in art she was portrayed carrying or accompanied by a pig; and the pig was regularly sacrificed in her mysteries, the reason assigned being that the pig injures the corn and is therefore an enemy of the goddess. But after an animal has been conceived as a god, or a god as an animal, it sometimes happens, as we have seen, that the god sloughs off his animal form and becomes purely anthropomorphic; and that then the animal, which at first had been slain in the character of the god, comes to be viewed as a victim offered to the god on the ground of its hostility to the deity; in short, the god is sacrificed to himself on the ground that he is his own enemy. This happened to Dionysus, and it may have happened to Demeter also. And in fact the rites of one of her festivals, the Thesmophoria, bear out the view that originally the pig was an embodiment of the corn-goddess herself, either Demeter or her daughter and double Persephone. The Attic Thesmophoria was an autumn festival, celebrated by women alone in October, and appears to have represented with mourning rites the descent of Persephone (or Demeter) into the lower world, and with joy her return from the dead. Hence the name Descent or Ascent variously applied to the first, and the name *Kalligeneia* (fair-born) applied to the third day of the festival. Now it was customary at the Thesmophoria to throw pigs, cakes of dough, and branches of pine-trees into "the chasms of Demeter and Persephone," which appear to have been sacred caverns or vaults. In these caverns or vaults there were said to be serpents, which guarded the caverns and consumed most of the flesh of the pigs and dough-cakes which were thrown in. Afterwards—apparently at the next annual festival—the decayed remains of the pigs, the cakes, and the pine-branches were fetched by women called "drawers," who, after observing rules of ceremonial purity for three days, descended into the caverns, and, frightening away the serpents by clapping their hands, brought up the remains and placed them on the altar. Whoever got a piece of the decayed flesh and cakes, and sowed it with the seed-corn in his field, was believed to be sure of a good crop.

To explain the rude and ancient ritual of the Thesmophoria the following legend was told. At the moment when Pluto carried off Persephone, a swineherd called Eubuleus chanced to be herding his swine on the spot, and his herd was engulfed in the chasm down which Pluto vanished with Persephone. Accordingly at the Thesmophoria pigs were annually thrown into caverns to commemorate the disappearance of the swine of Eubuleus. It follows from this that the casting of the pigs into the vaults at the Thesmophoria formed part of the dramatic representation of Persephone's descent into the lower world; and as no image of Persephone appears to have been

thrown in, we may infer that the descent of the pigs was not so much an accompaniment of her descent as the descent itself, in short, that the pigs were Persephone. Afterwards when Persephone or Demeter (for the two are equivalent) took on human form, a reason had to be found for the custom of throwing pigs into caverns at her festival; and this was done by saying that when Pluto carried off Persephone there happened to be some swine browsing near, which were swallowed up along with her. The story is obviously a forced and awkward attempt to bridge over the gulf between the old conception of the corn-spirit as a pig and the new conception of her as an anthropomorphic goddess. A trace of the older conception survived in the legend that when the sad mother was searching for traces of the vanished Persephone, the footprints of the lost one were obliterated by the footprints of a pig; originally, we may conjecture, the footprints of the pig were the footprints of Persephone and of Demeter herself. A consciousness of the intimate connexion of the pig with the corn lurks in the legend that the swineherd Eubuleus was a brother of Triptolemus, to whom Demeter first imparted the secret of the corn. Indeed, according to one version of the story, Eubuleus himself received, jointly with his brother Triptolemus, the gift of the corn from Demeter as a reward for revealing to her the fate of Persephone. Further, it is to be noted that at the Thesmophoria the women appear to have eaten swine's flesh. The meal, if I am right, must have been a solemn sacrament or communion, the worshippers partaking of the body of the god.

As thus explained, the Thesmophoria has its analogies in the folk-customs of Northern Europe which have been already described. Just as at the Thesmophoria—an autumn festival in honour of the corn-goddess—swine's flesh was partly eaten, partly kept in caverns till the following year, when it was taken up to be sown with the seed-corn in the fields for the purpose of securing a good crop; so in the neighbourhood of Grenoble the goat killed on the harvest-field is partly eaten at the harvest-supper, partly pickled and kept till the next harvest; so at Pouilly the ox killed on the harvest-field is partly eaten by the harvesters, partly pickled and kept till the first day of sowing in spring, probably to be then mixed with the seed, or eaten by the ploughmen, or both; so at Udvarhely the feathers of the cock which is killed in the last sheaf at harvest are kept till spring, and then sown with the seed on the field; so in Hesse and Meiningen the flesh of pigs is eaten on Ash Wednesday or Candlemas, and the bones are kept till sowing-time, when they are put into the field sown or mixed with the seed in the bag; so, lastly, the corn from the last sheaf is kept till Christmas, made into the Yule Boar, and afterwards broken and mixed with the seed-corn at sowing in spring. Thus, to put it generally, the corn-spirit is killed in animal form in autumn; part of his flesh is eaten as a sacrament by his worshippers; and part of it is kept till next sowing-time or harvest as a pledge and security for the continuance or renewal of the corn-spirit's energies.

If persons of fastidious taste should object that the Greeks never could have conceived Demeter and Persephone to be embodied in the form of pigs, it may be answered that in the cave of Phigalia in Arcadia the Black Demeter was portrayed with the head and mane of a horse on the body of a woman. Between the portraits of a goddess as a pig, and the portrait of her as a woman with a horse's head, there is little to choose in respect of barbarism. The legend told of the Phigalian Demeter indicates that the horse was one of the animal forms assumed in ancient Greece, as in modern Europe, by the corn-spirit. It was said that in her search for her daughter, Demeter assumed the form of a mare to escape the addresses of Poseidon, and that, offended at his importunity, she withdrew in dudgeon to a cave not far from Phigalia in the highlands of Western Arcadia. There, robed in black, she tarried so long that the fruits of the earth were perishing, and mankind would have died of famine if Pan had not soothed the angry goddess and persuaded her to quit the cave. In memory of this event, the Phigalians set up an image of the Black Demeter in the cave; it represented a woman dressed in a long robe, with the head and mane of a horse. The Black Demeter, in whose absence the fruits of the earth perish, is plainly a mythical expression for the bare wintry earth stripped of its summer mantle of green.

§ 3. *Attis, Adonis, and the Pig.*—Passing now to Attis and Adonis, we may note a few facts which seem to show that these deities of vegetation had also, like other deities of the same class, their animal embodiments. The worshippers of Attis abstained from eating the flesh of swine. This appears to indicate that the pig was regarded as an embodiment of Attis. And the legend that Attis was killed by a boar points in the same direction. For after the examples of the goat Dionysus and the pig Demeter it may almost be laid down as a rule that an animal which is said to have injured a god was originally the god himself. Perhaps the cry of "Hyes Attes! Hyes Attes!" which was raised by the worshippers of Attis, may be neither more nor less than "Pig Attis! Pig Attis!"—*hyes* being possibly a Phrygian form of the Greek *hȳs*, "a pig."

In regard to Adonis, his connexion with the boar was not always explained by the story that he had been killed by the animal. According to another story, a boar rent with his tusk the bark of the tree in which the infant Adonis was born. According to yet another story, he perished at the hands of Hephaestus on Mount Lebanon while he was hunting wild boars. These variations in the legend serve to show that, while the connexion of the boar with Adonis was certain, the reason of the connexion was not understood, and that consequently different stories were devised to explain it. Certainly the pig ranked as a sacred animal among the Syrians. At the great religious metropolis of Hierapolis on the Euphrates pigs were neither sacrificed nor eaten, and if a man touched a pig he was unclean for the rest of the day. Some people said this was because the pigs were unclean; others said it was because the pigs were sacred. This difference of opinion

points to a hazy state of religious thought in which the ideas of sanctity and uncleanness are not yet sharply distinguished, both being blent in a sort of vaporous solution to which we give the name of taboo. It is quite consistent with this that the pig should have been held to be an embodiment of the divine Adonis, and the analogies of Dionysus and Demeter make it probable that the story of the hostility of the animal to the god was only a late misapprehension of the old view of the god as embodied in a pig. The rule that pigs were not sacrificed or eaten by worshippers of Attis and presumably of Adonis, does not exclude the possibility that in these rituals the pig was slain on solemn occasions as a representative of the god and consumed sacramentally by the worshippers. Indeed, the sacramental killing and eating of an animal implies that the animal is sacred, and that, as a general rule, it is spared.

The attitude of the Jews to the pig was as ambiguous as that of the heathen Syrians towards the same animal. The Greeks could not decide whether the Jews worshipped swine or abominated them. On the one hand they might not eat swine; but on the other hand they might not kill them. And if the former rule speaks for the uncleanness, the latter speaks still more strongly for the sanctity of the animal. For whereas both rules may, and one rule must, be explained on the supposition that the pig was sacred; neither rule must, and one rule cannot, be explained on the supposition that the pig was unclean. If, therefore, we prefer the former supposition, we must conclude that, originally at least, the pig was revered rather than abhorred by the Israelites. We are confirmed in this opinion by observing that down to the time of Isaiah some of the Jews used to meet secretly in gardens to eat the flesh of swine and mice as a religious rite. Doubtless this was a very ancient ceremony, dating from a time when both the pig and the mouse were venerated as divine, and when their flesh was partaken of sacramentally on rare and solemn occasions as the body and blood of gods. And in general it may perhaps be said that all so-called unclean animals were originally sacred; the reason for not eating them was that they were divine.

§ 4. *Osiris, the Pig and the Bull.*—In ancient Egypt, within historical times, the pig occupied the same dubious position as in Syria and Palestine, though at first sight its uncleanness is more prominent than its sanctity. The Egyptians are generally said by Greek writers to have abhorred the pig as a foul and loathsome animal. If a man so much as touched a pig in passing, he stepped into the river with all his clothes on, to wash off the taint. To drink pig's milk was believed to cause leprosy to the drinker. Swineherds, though natives of Egypt, were forbidden to enter any temple, and they were the only men who were thus excluded. No one would give his daughter in marriage to a swineherd, or marry a swineherd's daughter; the swineherds married among themselves. Yet once a year the Egyptians sacrificed pigs to the moon and to Osiris, and not only sacrificed them but ate of their flesh, though on any other

day of the year they would neither sacrifice them nor taste of their flesh. Those who were too poor to offer a pig on this day baked cakes of dough, and offered them instead. This can hardly be explained except by the supposition that the pig was a sacred animal which was eaten sacramentally by his worshippers once a year.

The view that in Egypt the pig was sacred is borne out by the very facts which, to moderns, might seem to prove the contrary. Thus the Egyptians thought, as we have seen, that to drink pig's milk produced leprosy. But exactly analogous views are held by savages about the animals and plants which they deem most sacred. Thus in the island of Wetar (between New Guinea and Celebes) people believe themselves to be variously descended from wild pigs, serpents, crocodiles, turtles, dogs, and eels; a man may not eat an animal of the kind from which he is descended; if he does so, he will become a leper, and go mad. Amongst the Omaha Indians of North America men whose totem is the elk, believe that if they ate the flesh of the male elk they would break out in boils and white spots in different parts of their bodies. In the same tribe men whose totem is the red maize, think that if they ate red maize they would have running sores all round their mouths. The Bush negroes of Surinam, who practise totemism, believe that if they ate the *capiaï* (an animal like a pig) it would give them leprosy; perhaps the *capiaï* is one of their totems. The Syrians, in antiquity, who esteemed fish sacred, thought that if they ate fish their bodies would break out in ulcers, and their feet and stomach would swell up. The Chasas of Orissa believe that if they were to injure their totemic animal they would be attacked by leprosy and their line would die out. These examples prove that the eating of a sacred animal is often believed to produce leprosy or other skin-diseases; so far, therefore, they support the view that the pig must have been sacred in Egypt, since the effect of drinking its milk was believed to be leprosy.

Again, the rule that, after touching a pig, a man had to wash himself and his clothes, also favours the view of the sanctity of the pig. For it is a common belief that the effect of contact with a sacred object must be removed, by washing or otherwise, before a man is free to mingle with his fellows. Thus the Jews wash their hands after reading the sacred scriptures. Before coming forth from the tabernacle after the sin-offering, the high priest had to wash himself, and put off the garments which he had worn in the holy place. It was a rule of Greek ritual that, in offering an expiatory sacrifice, the sacrificer should not touch the sacrifice, and that, after the offering was made, he must wash his body and his clothes in a river or spring before he could enter a city or his own house. The Polynesians felt strongly the need of ridding themselves of the sacred contagion, if it may be so called, which they caught by touching sacred objects. Various ceremonies were performed for the purpose of removing this contagion. We have seen, for example, how in Tonga a man who happened to touch a sacred chief, or anything personally belonging to him, had to perform a certain ceremony before he could feed himself with his hands;

otherwise it was believed that he would swell up and die, or at least be afflicted with scrofula or some other disease. We have seen, too, what fatal effects are supposed to follow, and do actually follow, from contact with a sacred object in New Zealand. In short, primitive man believes that what is sacred is dangerous; it is pervaded by a sort of electrical sanctity which communicates a shock to, even if it does not kill, whatever comes in contact with it. Hence the savage is unwilling to touch or even to see that which he deems peculiarly holy. Thus Bechuanas, of the Crocodile clan, think it "hateful and unlucky" to meet or see a crocodile; the sight is thought to cause inflammation of the eyes. Yet the crocodile is their most sacred object; they call it their father, swear by it, and celebrate it in their festivals. The goat is the sacred animal of the Madenassana Bushmen; yet "to look upon it would be to render the man for the time impure, as well as to cause him undefined uneasiness." The Elk clan, among the Omaha Indians, believe that even to touch the male elk would be followed by an eruption of boils and white spots on the body. Members of the Reptile clan in the same tribe think that if one of them touches or smells a snake, it will make his hair white. In Samoa people whose god was a butterfly believed that if they caught a butterfly it would strike them dead. Again, in Samoa the reddish-seared leaves of the banana-tree were commonly used as plates for handing food; but if any member of the Wild Pigeon family had used banana leaves for this purpose, it was supposed that he would suffer from rheumatic swellings or an eruption all over the body like chicken-pox. The Mori clan of the Bhils in Central India worship the peacock as their totem and make offerings of grain to it; yet members of the clan believe that were they even to set foot on the tracks of a peacock they would afterwards suffer from some disease, and if a woman sees a peacock she must veil her face and look away. Thus the primitive mind seems to conceive of holiness as a sort of dangerous virus, which a prudent man will shun as far as possible, and of which, if he should chance to be infected by it, he will carefully disinfect himself by some form of ceremonial purification.

In the light of these parallels the beliefs and customs of the Egyptians touching the pig are probably to be explained as based upon an opinion of the extreme sanctity rather than of the extreme uncleanness of the animal; or rather, to put it more correctly, they imply that the animal was looked on, not simply as a filthy and disgusting creature, but as a being endowed with high supernatural powers, and that as such it was regarded with that primitive sentiment of religious awe and fear in which the feelings of reverence and abhorrence are almost equally blended. The ancients themselves seem to have been aware that there was another side to the horror with which swine seemed to inspire the Egyptians. For the Greek astronomer and mathematician Eudoxus, who resided fourteen months in Egypt and conversed with the priests, was of opinion that the Egyptians spared the pig, not out of abhorrence, but from a regard to its utility

in agriculture; for, according to him, when the Nile had subsided, herds of swine were turned loose over the fields to tread the seed down into the moist earth. But when a being is thus the object of mixed and implicitly contradictory feelings, he may be said to occupy a position of unstable equilibrium. In course of time one of the contradictory feelings is likely to prevail over the other, and according as the feeling which finally predominates is that of reverence or abhorrence, the being who is the object of it will rise into a god or sink into a devil. The latter, on the whole, was the fate of the pig in Egypt. For in historical times the fear and horror of the pig seem certainly to have outweighed the reverence and worship of which he may once have been the object, and of which, even in his fallen state, he never quite lost trace. He came to be looked on as an embodiment of Set or Typhon, the Egyptian devil and enemy of Osiris. For it was in the shape of a black pig that Typhon injured the eye of the god Horus, who burned him and instituted the sacrifice of the pig, the sun-god Ra having declared the beast abominable. Again, the story that Typhon was hunting a boar when he discovered and mangled the body of Osiris, and that this was the reason why pigs were sacrificed once a year, is clearly a modernised version of an older story that Osiris, like Adonis and Attis, was slain or mangled by a boar, or by Typhon in the form of a boar. Thus, the annual sacrifice of a pig to Osiris might naturally be interpreted as vengeance inflicted on the hostile animal that had slain or mangled the god. But, in the first place, when an animal is thus killed as a solemn sacrifice once and once only in the year, it generally or always means that the animal is divine, that he is spared and respected the rest of the year as a god and slain, when he is slain, also in the character of a god. In the second place, the examples of Dionysus and Demeter, if not of Attis and Adonis, have taught us that the animal which is sacrificed to a god on the ground that he is the god's enemy may have been, and probably was, originally the god himself. Therefore, the annual sacrifice of a pig to Osiris, coupled with the alleged hostility of the animal to the god, tends to show, first, that originally the pig was a god, and, second, that he was Osiris. At a later age, when Osiris became anthropomorphic and his original relation to the pig had been forgotten, the animal was first distinguished from him, and afterwards opposed as an enemy to him by mythologists who could think of no reason for killing a beast in connexion with the worship of a god except that the beast was the god's enemy; or, as Plutarch puts it, not that which is dear to the gods, but that which is the contrary, is fit to be sacrificed. At this later stage the havoc which a wild boar notoriously makes amongst the corn would supply a plausible reason for regarding him as the foe of the corn-spirit, though originally, if I am right, the very freedom with which the boar ranged at will through the corn led people to identify him with the corn-spirit, to whom he was afterwards opposed as an enemy.

The view which identifies the pig with Osiris derives not a little

support from the sacrifice of pigs to him on the very day on which, according to tradition, Osiris himself was killed; for thus the killing of the pig was the annual representation of the killing of Osiris, just as the throwing of the pigs into the caverns at the Thesmophoria was an annual representation of the descent of Persephone into the lower world; and both customs are parallel to the European practice of killing a goat, cock, and so forth, at harvest as a representative of the corn-spirit.

Again, the theory that the pig, originally Osiris himself, afterwards came to be regarded as an embodiment of his enemy Typhon, is supported by the similar relation of red-haired men and red oxen to Typhon. For in regard to the red-haired men who were burned and whose ashes were scattered with winnowing-fans, we have seen fair grounds for believing that originally, like the red-haired puppies killed at Rome in spring, they were representatives of the corn-spirit himself that is, of Osiris, and were slain for the express purpose of making the corn turn red or golden. Yet at a later time these men were explained to be representatives, not of Osiris, but of his enemy Typhon, and the killing of them was regarded as an act of vengeance inflicted on the enemy of the god. Similarly, the red oxen sacrificed by the Egyptians were said to be offered on the ground of their resemblance to Typhon; though it is more likely that originally they were slain on the ground of their resemblance to the corn-spirit Osiris. We have seen that the ox is a common representative of the corn-spirit and is slain as such on the harvest-field.

Osiris was regularly identified with the bull Apis of Memphis and the bull Mnevis of Heliopolis. But it is hard to say whether these bulls were embodiments of him as the corn-spirit, as the red oxen appear to have been, or whether they were not in origin entirely distinct deities who came to be fused with Osiris at a later time. The universality of the worship of these two bulls seems to put them on a different footing from the ordinary sacred animals whose worships were purely local. But whatever the original relation of Apis to Osiris may have been, there is one fact about the former which ought not to be passed over in a disquisition on the custom of killing a god. Although the bull Apis was worshipped as a god with much pomp and profound reverence, he was not suffered to live beyond a certain length of time which was prescribed by the sacred books, and on the expiry of which he was drowned in a holy spring. The limit, according to Plutarch, was twenty-five years; but it cannot always have been enforced, for the tombs of the Apis bulls have been discovered in modern times, and from the inscriptions on them it appears that in the twenty-second dynasty two of the holy steers lived more than twenty-six years.

§ 5. *Virbius and the Horse.*—We are now in a position to hazard a conjecture as to the meaning of the tradition that Virbius, the first of the divine Kings of the Wood at Aricia, had been killed in the character of Hippolytus by horses. Having found, first, that spirits

of the corn are not infrequently represented in the form of horses; and, second, that the animal which in later legends is said to have injured the god was sometimes originally the god himself, we may conjecture that the horses by which Virbius or Hippolytus was said to have been slain were really embodiments of him as a deity of vegetation. The myth that he had been killed by horses was probably invented to explain certain features in his worship, amongst others the custom of excluding horses from his sacred grove. For myth changes while custom remains constant; men continue to do what their fathers did before them, though the reasons on which their fathers acted have been long forgotten. The history of religion is a long attempt to reconcile old custom with new reason, to find a sound theory for an absurd practice. In the case before us we may be sure that the myth is more modern than the custom and by no means represents the original reason for excluding horses from the grove. From their exclusion it might be inferred that horses could not be the sacred animals or embodiments of the god of the grove. But the inference would be rash. The goat was at one time a sacred animal or embodiment of Athena, as may be inferred from the practice of representing the goddess clad in a goat-skin (*aegis*). Yet the goat was neither sacrificed to her as a rule, nor allowed to enter her great sanctuary, the Acropolis at Athens. The reason alleged for this was that the goat injured the olive, the sacred tree of Athena. So far, therefore, the relation of the goat to Athena is parallel to the relation of the horse to Virbius, both animals being excluded from the sanctuary on the ground of injury done by them to the god. But from Varro we learn that there was an exception to the rule which excluded the goat from the Acropolis. Once a year, he says, the goat was driven on to the Acropolis for a necessary sacrifice. Now, as has been remarked before, when an animal is sacrificed once and once only in the year, it is probably slain, not as a victim offered to the god, but as a representative of the god himself. Therefore we may infer that if a goat was sacrificed on the Acropolis once a year, it was sacrificed in the character of Athena herself; and it may be conjectured that the skin of the sacrificed animal was placed on the statue of the goddess and formed the *aegis*, which would thus be renewed annually. Similarly at Thebes in Egypt rams were sacred and were not sacrificed. But on one day in the year a ram was killed, and its skin was placed on the statue of the god Ammon. Now, if we knew the ritual of the Arician grove better, we might find that the rule of excluding horses from it, like the rule of excluding goats from the Acropolis at Athens, was subject to an annual exception, a horse being once a year taken into the grove and sacrificed as an embodiment of the god Virbius. By the usual misunderstanding the horse thus killed would come in time to be regarded as an enemy offered up in sacrifice to the god whom he had injured, like the pig which was sacrificed to Demeter and Osiris or the goat which was sacrificed to Dionysus, and possibly to Athena. It is so easy for a writer to record a rule without noticing

an exception that we need not wonder at finding the rule of the Arician grove recorded without any mention of an exception such as I suppose. If we had had only the statements of Athenaeus and Pliny, we should have known only the rule which forbade the sacrifice of goats to Athena and excluded them from the Acropolis, without being aware of the important exception which the fortunate preservation of Varro's work has revealed to us.

The conjecture that once a year a horse may have been sacrificed in the Arician grove as a representative of the deity of the grove derives some support from the similar sacrifice of a horse which took place once a year at Rome. On the fifteenth of October in each year a chariot-race was run on the Field of Mars. Stabbed with a spear, the right-hand horse of the victorious team was then sacrificed to Mars for the purpose of ensuring good crops, and its head was cut off and adorned with a string of loaves. Thereupon the inhabitants of two wards—the Sacred Way and the Subura—contended with each other who should get the head. If the people of the Sacred Way got it, they fastened it to a wall of the king's house; if the people of the Subura got it, they fastened it to the Mamilian tower. The horse's tail was cut off and carried to the king's house with such speed that the blood dripped on the hearth of the house. Further, it appears that the blood of the horse was caught and preserved till the twenty-first of April, when the Vestal Virgins mixed it with the blood of the unborn calves which had been sacrificed six days before. The mixture was then distributed to shepherds, and used by them for fumigating their flocks.

In this ceremony the decoration of the horse's head with a string of loaves, and the alleged object of the sacrifice, namely, to procure a good harvest, seem to indicate that the horse was killed as one of those animal representatives of the corn-spirit of which we have found so many examples. The custom of cutting off the horse's tail is like the African custom of cutting off the tails of the oxen and sacrificing them to obtain a good crop. In both the Roman and the African custom the animal apparently stands for the corn-spirit, and its fructifying power is supposed to reside especially in its tail. The latter idea occurs, as we have seen, in European folk-lore. Again, the practice of fumigating the cattle in spring with the blood of the horse may be compared with the practice of giving the Old Wife, the Maiden, or the *clyack* sheaf as fodder to the horses in spring or the cattle at Christmas, and giving the Yule Boar to the ploughing oxen or horses to eat in spring. All these usages aim at ensuring the blessing of the corn-spirit on the homestead and its inmates and storing it up for another year.

The Roman sacrifice of the October horse, as it was called, carries us back to the early days when the Subura, afterwards a low and squalid quarter of the great metropolis, was still a separate village, whose inhabitants engaged in a friendly contest on the harvest-field with their neighbours of Rome, then a little rural town. The Field

of Mars on which the ceremony took place lay beside the Tiber, and formed part of the king's domain down to the abolition of the monarchy. For tradition ran that at the time when the last of the kings was driven from Rome, the corn stood ripe for the sickle on the crown lands beside the river; but no one would eat the accursed grain and it was flung into the river in such heaps that, the water being low with the summer heat, it formed the nucleus of an island. The horse sacrifice was thus an old autumn custom observed upon the king's corn-fields at the end of the harvest. The tail and blood of the horse, as the chief parts of the corn-spirit's representative, were taken to the king's house and kept there; just as in Germany the harvest-cock is nailed on the gable or over the door of the farmhouse; and as the last sheaf, in the form of the Maiden, is carried home and kept over the fireplace in the Highlands of Scotland. Thus the blessing of the corn-spirit was brought to the king's house and hearth and, through them, to the community of which he was the head. Similarly in the spring and autumn customs of Northern Europe the May-pole is sometimes set up in front of the house of the mayor or burgomaster, and the last sheaf at harvest is brought to him as the head of the village. But while the tail and blood fell to the king, the neighbouring village of the Subura, which no doubt once had a similar ceremony of its own, was gratified by being allowed to compete for the prize of the horse's head. The Mamilian tower, to which the Suburans nailed the horse's head when they succeeded in carrying it off, appears to have been a peel-tower or keep of the old Mamilian family, the magnates of the village. The ceremony thus performed on the king's fields and at his house on behalf of the whole town and of the neighbouring village presupposes a time when each township performed a similar ceremony on its own fields. In the rural districts of Latium the villages may have continued to observe the custom, each on its own land, long after the Roman hamlets had merged their separate harvest-homes in the common celebration on the king's lands. There is no intrinsic improbability in the supposition that the sacred grove of Aricia, like the Field of Mars at Rome, may have been the scene of a common harvest celebration, at which a horse was sacrificed with the same rude rites on behalf of the neighbouring villages. The horse would represent the fructifying spirit both of the tree and of the corn, for the two ideas melt into each other, as we see in customs like the Harvest-May.

CHAPTER L

EATING THE GOD

§ 1. *The Sacrament of First-Fruits.*—We have now seen that the corn-spirit is represented sometimes in human, sometimes in animal form, and that in both cases he is killed in the person of his repre-

sentative and eaten sacramentally. To find examples of actually killing the human representative of the corn-spirit we had naturally to go to savage races; but the harvest-suppers of our European peasants have furnished unmistakable examples of the sacramental eating of animals as representatives of the corn-spirit. But further, as might have been anticipated, the new corn is itself eaten sacramentally, that is, as the body of the corn-spirit. In Wermland, Sweden, the farmer's wife uses the grain of the last sheaf to bake a loaf in the shape of a little girl; this loaf is divided amongst the whole household and eaten by them. Here the loaf represents the corn-spirit conceived as a maiden; just as in Scotland the corn-spirit is similarly conceived and represented by the last sheaf made up in the form of a woman and bearing the name of the Maiden. As usual, the corn-spirit is believed to reside in the last sheaf; and to eat a loaf made from the last sheaf is, therefore, to eat the corn-spirit itself. Similarly at La Palisse, in France, a man made of dough is hung upon the fir-tree which is carried on the last harvest-waggon. The tree and the dough-man are taken to the mayor's house and kept there till the vintage is over. Then the close of the harvest is celebrated by a feast at which the mayor breaks the dough-man in pieces and gives the pieces to the people to eat.

In these examples the corn-spirit is represented and eaten in human shape. In other cases, though the new corn is not baked in loaves of human shape, still the solemn ceremonies with which it is eaten suffice to indicate that it is partaken of sacramentally, that is, as the body of the corn-spirit. For example, the following ceremonies used to be observed by Lithuanian peasants at eating the new corn. About the time of the autumn sowing, when all the corn had been got in and the threshing had begun, each farmer held a festival called Sabarios, that is, "the mixing or throwing together." He took nine good handfuls of each kind of crop—wheat, barley, oats, flax, beans, lentils, and the rest; and each handful he divided into three parts. The twenty-seven portions of each grain were then thrown on a heap and all mixed up together. The grain used had to be that which was first threshed and winnowed and which had been set aside and kept for this purpose. A part of the grain thus mixed was employed to bake little loaves, one for each of the household; the rest was mixed with more barley or oats and made into beer. The first beer brewed from this mixture was for the drinking of the farmer, his wife, and children; the second brew was for the servants. The beer being ready, the farmer chose an evening when no stranger was expected. Then he knelt down before the barrel of beer, drew a jugful of the liquor and poured it on the bung of the barrel, saying, "O fruitful earth, make rye and barley and all kinds of corn to flourish." Next he took the jug to the parlour, where his wife and children awaited him. On the floor of the parlour lay bound a black or white or speckled (not a red) cock and a hen of the same colour and of the same brood, which must have been hatched within the year. Then the farmer knelt down, with the jug in his

hand, and thanked God for the harvest and prayed for a good crop next year. Next all lifted up their hands and said, "O God, and thou, O earth, we give you this cock and hen as a free-will offering." With that the farmer killed the fowls with the blows of a wooden spoon, for he might not cut their heads off. After the first prayer and after killing each of the birds he poured out a third of the beer. Then his wife boiled the fowls in a new pot which had never been used before. After that, a bushel was set, bottom upwards, on the floor, and on it were placed the little loaves mentioned above and the boiled fowls. Next the new beer was fetched, together with a ladle and three mugs, none of which was used except on this occasion. When the farmer had ladled the beer into the mugs, the family knelt down round the bushel. The father then uttered a prayer and drank off the three mugs of beer. The rest followed his example. Then the loaves and the flesh of the fowls were eaten, after which the beer went round again, till every one had emptied each of the three mugs nine times. None of the food should remain over; but if anything did happen to be left, it was consumed next morning with the same ceremonies. The bones were given to the dog to eat; if he did not eat them all up, the remains were buried under the dung in the cattle-stall. This ceremony was observed at the beginning of December. On the day on which it took place no bad word might be spoken.

Such was the custom about two hundred years or more ago. At the present day in Lithuania, when new potatoes or loaves made from the new corn are being eaten, all the people at table pull each other's hair. The meaning of this last custom is obscure, but a similar custom was certainly observed by the heathen Lithuanians at their solemn sacrifices. Many of the Esthonians of the island of Oesel will not eat bread baked of the new corn till they have first taken a bite at a piece of iron. The iron is here plainly a charm, intended to render harmless the spirit that is in the corn. In Sutherlandshire at the present day, when the new potatoes are dug all the family must taste them, otherwise "the spirits in them [the potatoes] take offence, and the potatoes would not keep." In one part of Yorkshire it is still customary for the clergyman to cut the first corn; and my informant believes that the corn so cut is used to make the communion bread. If the latter part of the custom is correctly reported (and analogy is all in its favour), it shows how the Christian communion has absorbed within itself a sacrament which is doubtless far older than Christianity.

The Aino or Ainu of Japan are said to distinguish various kinds of millet as male and female respectively, and these kinds, taken together, are called "the divine husband and wife cereal" (*Umurek haru kamui*). "Therefore before millet is pounded and made into cakes for general eating, the old men have a few made for themselves first to worship. When they are ready they pray to them very earnestly and say: 'O thou cereal deity, we worship thee. Thou hast grown very well this year, and thy flavour will be sweet. Thou art good. The goddess of fire will be glad, and we also shall rejoice greatly. O thou god, O

thou divine cereal, do thou nourish the people. I now partake of thee. I worship thee and give thee thanks.' After having thus prayed, they, the worshippers, take a cake and eat it, and from this time the people may all partake of the new millet. And so with many gestures of homage and words of prayer this kind of food is dedicated to the well-being of the Ainu. No doubt the cereal offering is regarded as a tribute paid to a god, but that god is no other than the seed itself; and it is only a god in so far as it is beneficial to the human body."

At the close of the rice harvest in the East Indian island of Buru, each clan meets at a common sacramental meal, to which every member of the clan is bound to contribute a little of the new rice. This meal is called "eating the soul of the rice," a name which clearly indicates the sacramental character of the repast. Some of the rice is also set apart and offered to the spirits. Amongst the Alfoors of Minahassa, in Celebes, the priest sows the first rice-seed and plucks the first ripe rice in each field. This rice he roasts and grinds into meal, and gives some of it to each of the household. Shortly before the rice-harvest in Bolang Mongondo, another district of Celebes, an offering is made of a small pig or a fowl. Then the priest plucks a little rice, first on his own field and next on those of his neighbours. All the rice thus plucked by him he dries along with his own, and then gives it back to the respective owners, who have it ground and boiled. When it is boiled the women take it back, with an egg, to the priest, who offers the egg in sacrifice and returns the rice to the women. Of this rice every member of the family, down to the youngest child, must partake. After this ceremony every one is free to get in his rice.

Amongst the Burghers or Badagas, a tribe of the Neilgherry Hills in Southern India, the first handful of seed is sown and the first sheaf reaped by a Curumbar, a man of a different tribe, the members of which the Burghers regard as sorcerers. The grain contained in the first sheaf "is that day reduced to meal, made into cakes, and, being offered as a first-fruit oblation, is, together with the remainder of the sacrificed animal, partaken of by the Burgher and the whole of his family, as the meat of a federal offering and sacrifice." Among the Hindoos of Southern India the eating of the new rice is the occasion of a family festival called Pongol. The new rice is boiled in a new pot on a fire which is kindled at noon on the day when, according to Hindoo astrologers, the sun enters the tropic of Capricorn. The boiling of the pot is watched with great anxiety by the whole family, for as the milk boils, so will the coming year be. If the milk boils rapidly, the year will be prosperous; but it will be the reverse if the milk boils slowly. Some of the new boiled rice is offered to the image of Ganesa; then every one partakes of it. In some parts of Northern India the festival of the new crop is known as *Navan*, that is, "new grain." When the crop is ripe, the owner takes the omens, goes to the field, plucks five or six ears of barley in the spring crop and one of the millets in the autumn harvest. This is brought home, parched, and mixed with coarse sugar, butter, and curds. Some of it is thrown

on the fire in the name of the village gods and deceased ancestors; the rest is eaten by the family.

The ceremony of eating the new yams at Onitsha, on the Niger, is thus described: "Each headman brought out six yams, and cut down young branches of palm-leaves and placed them before his gate, roasted three of the yams, and got some kola-nuts and fish. After the yam is roasted, the *Libia*, or country doctor, takes the yam, scrapes it into a sort of meal, and divides it into halves; he then takes one piece, and places it on the lips of the person who is going to eat the new yam. The eater then blows up the steam from the hot yam, and afterwards pokes the whole into his mouth, and says, 'I thank God for being permitted to eat the new yam'; he then begins to chew it heartily, with fish likewise."

Among the Nandi of British East Africa, when the eleusine grain is ripening in autumn, every woman who owns a corn-field goes out into it with her daughters, and they all pluck some of the ripe grain. Each of the women then fixes one grain in her necklace and chews another, which she rubs on her forehead, throat, and breast. No mark of joy escapes them; sorrowfully they cut a basketful of the new corn, and carrying it home place it in the loft to dry. As the ceiling is of wickerwork, a good deal of the grain drops through the crevices and falls into the fire, where it explodes with a crackling noise. The people make no attempt to prevent this waste; for they regard the crackling of the grain in the fire as a sign that the souls of the dead are partaking of it. A few days later porridge is made from the new grain and served up with milk at the evening meal. All the members of the family take some of the porridge and dab it on the walls and roofs of the huts; also they put a little in their mouths and spit it out towards the east and on the outside of the huts. Then, holding up some of the grain in his hand, the head of the family prays to God for health and strength, and likewise for milk, and everybody present repeats the words of the prayer after him.

Amongst the Caffres of Natal and Zululand, no one may eat of the new fruits till after a festival which marks the beginning of the Caffre year and falls at the end of December or the beginning of January. All the people assemble at the king's kraal, where they feast and dance. Before they separate the "dedication of the people" takes place. Various fruits of the earth, as corn, mealies, and pumpkins, mixed with the flesh of a sacrificed animal and with "medicine," are boiled in great pots, and a little of this food is placed in each man's mouth by the king himself. After thus partaking of the sanctified fruits, a man is himself sanctified for the whole year, and may immediately get in his crops. It is believed that if any man were to partake of the new fruits before the festival, he would die; if he were detected, he would be put to death, or at least all his cattle would be taken from him. The holiness of the new fruits is well marked by the rule that they must be cooked in a special pot

which is used only for this purpose, and on a new fire kindled by a magician through the friction of two sticks which are called "husband and wife."

Among the Bechuanas it is a rule that before they partake of the new crops they must purify themselves. The purification takes place at the commencement of the new year on a day in January which is fixed by the chief. It begins in the great kraal of the tribe, where all the adult males assemble. Each of them takes in his hand leaves of a gourd called by the natives *lerotse* (described as something between a pumpkin and a vegetable marrow); and having crushed the leaves he anoints with the expressed juice his big toes and his navel; many people indeed apply the juice to all the joints of their body, but the better-informed say that this is a vulgar departure from ancient custom. After this ceremony in the great kraal every man goes home to his own kraal, assembles all the members of his family, men, women, and children, and smears them all with the juice of the *lerotse* leaves. Some of the leaves are also pounded, mixed with milk in a large wooden dish, and given to the dogs to lap up. Then the porridge plate of each member of the family is rubbed with the *lerotse* leaves. When this purification has been completed, but not before, the people are free to eat of the new crops.

The Bororo Indians of Brazil think that it would be certain death to eat the new maize before it has been blessed by the medicine-man. The ceremony of blessing it is as follows. The half-ripe husk is washed and placed before the medicine-man, who by dancing and singing for several hours, and by incessant smoking, works himself up into a state of ecstasy, whereupon he bites into the husk, trembling in every limb and uttering shrieks from time to time. A similar ceremony is performed whenever a large animal or a large fish is killed. The Bororo are firmly persuaded that were any man to touch unconsecrated maize or meat, before the ceremony had been completed, he and his whole tribe would perish.

Amongst the Creek Indians of North America, the *busk* or festival of first-fruits was the chief ceremony of the year. It was held in July or August, when the corn was ripe, and marked the end of the old year and the beginning of the new one. Before it took place, none of the Indians would eat or even handle any part of the new harvest. Sometimes each town had its own busk; sometimes several towns united to hold one in common. Before celebrating the busk, the people provided themselves with new clothes and new household utensils and furniture; they collected their old clothes and rubbish, together with all the remaining grain and other old provisions, cast them together in one common heap, and consumed them with fire. As a preparation for the ceremony, all the fires in the village were extinguished, and the ashes swept clean away. In particular, the hearth or altar of the temple was dug up and the ashes carried out. Then the chief priest put some roots of the button-snake plant, with some green tobacco leaves and a little of the new fruits, at the bottom

of the fireplace, which he afterwards commanded to be covered up with white clay, and wetted over with clean water. A thick arbour of green branches of young trees was then made over the altar. Meanwhile the women at home were cleaning out their houses, renewing the old hearths, and scouring all the cooking vessels that they might be ready to receive the new fire and the new fruits. The public or sacred square was carefully swept of even the smallest crumbs of previous feasts, "for fear of polluting the first-fruit offerings." Also every vessel that had contained or had been used about any food during the expiring year was removed from the temple before sunset. Then all the men who were not known to have violated the law of the first-fruit offering and that of marriage during the year were summoned by a crier to enter the holy square and observe a solemn fast. But the women (except six old ones), the children, and all who had not attained the rank of warriors were forbidden to enter the square. Sentinels were also posted at the corners of the square to keep out all persons deemed impure and all animals. A strict fast was then observed for two nights and a day, the devotees drinking a bitter decoction of button-snake root "in order to vomit and purge their sinful bodies." That the people outside the square might also be purified, one of the old men laid down a quantity of green tobacco at a corner of the square; this was carried off by an old woman and distributed to the people without, who chewed and swallowed it "in order to afflict their souls." During this general fast, the women, children, and men of weak constitution were allowed to eat after mid-day, but not before. On the morning when the fast ended, the women brought a quantity of the old year's food to the outside of the sacred square. These provisions were then fetched in and set before the famished multitude, but all traces of them had to be removed before noon. When the sun was declining from the meridian, all the people were commanded by the voice of a crier to stay within doors, to do no bad act, and to be sure to extinguish and throw away every spark of the old fire. Universal silence now reigned. Then the high priest made the new fire by the friction of two pieces of wood, and placed it on the altar under the green arbour. This new fire was believed to atone for all past crimes except murder. Next a basket of new fruits was brought; the high priest took out a little of each sort of fruit, rubbed it with bear's oil, and offered it, together with some flesh, "to the bountiful holy spirit of fire, as a first-fruit offering, and an annual oblation for sin." He also consecrated the sacred emetics (the button-snake root and the cassina or black-drink) by pouring a little of them into the fire. The persons who had remained outside now approached, without entering, the sacred square; and the chief priest thereupon made a speech, exhorting the people to observe their old rites and customs, announcing that the new divine fire had purged away the sins of the past year, and earnestly warning the women that, if any of them had not extinguished the old fire, or had contracted any impurity, they must forthwith depart,

"lest the divine fire should spoil both them and the people." Some of the new fire was then set down outside the holy square; the women carried it home joyfully, and laid it on their unpolluted hearths. When several towns had united to celebrate the festival, the new fire might thus be carried for several miles. The new fruits were then dressed on the new fires and eaten with bear's oil, which was deemed indispensable. At one point of the festival the men rubbed the new corn between their hands, then on their faces and breasts. During the festival which followed, the warriors, dressed in their wild martial array, their heads covered with white down and carrying white feathers in their hands, danced round the sacred arbour, under which burned the new fire. The ceremonies lasted eight days, during which the strictest continence was practised. Towards the conclusion of the festival the warriors fought a mock battle; then the men and women together, in three circles, danced round the sacred fire. Lastly, all the people smeared themselves with white clay and bathed in running water. They came out of the water believing that no evil could now befall them for what they had done amiss in the past. So they departed in joy and peace.

To this day, also, the remnant of the Seminole Indians of Florida, a people of the same stock as the Creeks, hold an annual purification and festival called the Green Corn Dance, at which the new corn is eaten. On the evening of the first day of the festival they quaff a nauseous "Black Drink," as it is called, which acts both as an emetic and a purgative; they believe that he who does not drink of this liquor cannot safely eat the new green corn, and besides that he will be sick at some time in the year. While the liquor is being drunk, the dancing begins, and the medicine-men join in it. Next day they eat of the green corn; the following day they fast, probably from fear of polluting the sacred food in their stomachs by contact with common food; but the third day they hold a great feast.

Even tribes which do not till the ground sometimes observe analogous ceremonies when they gather the first wild fruits or dig the first roots of the season. Thus among the Salish and Tinneh Indians of North-West America, "before the young people eat the first berries or roots of the season, they always addressed the fruit or plant, and begged for its favour and aid. In some tribes regular First-fruit ceremonies were annually held at the time of picking the wild fruit or gathering the roots, and also among the salmon-eating tribes when the run of the 'sockeye' salmon began. These ceremonies were not so much thanksgivings, as performances to ensure a plentiful crop or supply of the particular object desired, for if they were not properly and reverently carried out there was danger of giving offence to the 'spirits' of the objects, and being deprived of them." For example, these Indians are fond of the young shoots or suckers of the wild raspberry, and they observe a solemn ceremony at eating the first of them in season. The shoots are cooked in a new pot: the people assemble and stand in a great circle with closed eyes, while the pre-

siding chief or medicine-man invokes the spirit of the plant, begging that it will be propitious to them and grant them a good supply of suckers. After this part of the ceremony is over the cooked suckers are handed to the presiding officer in a newly carved dish, and a small portion is given to each person present, who reverently and decorously eats it.

The Thompson Indians of British Columbia cook and eat the sunflower root (*Balsamorrhiza sagittata,* Nutt.), but they used to regard it as a mysterious being, and observed a number of taboos in connexion with it; for example, women who were engaged in digging or cooking the root must practice continence, and no man might come near the oven where the women were baking the root. When young people ate the first berries, roots, or other products of the season, they addressed a prayer to the Sunflower-Root as follows: "I inform thee that I intend to eat thee. Mayest thou always help me to ascend, so that I may always be able to reach the tops of mountains, and may I never be clumsy! I ask this from thee, Sunflower-Root. Thou art the greatest of all in mystery." To omit this prayer would make the eater lazy and cause him to sleep long in the morning.

These customs of the Thompson and other Indian tribes of North-West America are instructive, because they clearly indicate the motive, or at least one of the motives, which underlies the ceremonies observed at eating the first fruits of the season. That motive in the case of these Indians is simply a belief that the plant itself is animated by a conscious and more or less powerful spirit, who must be propitiated before the people can safely partake of the fruits or roots which are supposed to be part of his body. Now if this is true of wild fruits and roots, we may infer with some probability that it is also true of cultivated fruits and roots, such as yams, and in particular that it holds good of the cereals, such as wheat, barley, oats, rice, and maize. In all cases it seems reasonable to infer that the scruples which savages manifest at eating the first fruits of any crop, and the ceremonies which they observe before they overcome their scruples, are due at least in large measure to a notion that the plant or tree is animated by a spirit or even a deity, whose leave must be obtained, or whose favour must be sought, before it is possible to partake with safety of the new crop. This indeed is plainly affirmed of the Aino: they call the millet "the divine cereal," "the cereal deity," and they pray to and worship him before they will eat of the cakes made from the new millet. And even where the indwelling divinity of the first fruits is not expressly affirmed, it appears to be implied both by the solemn preparations made for eating them and by the danger supposed to be incurred by persons who venture to partake of them without observing the prescribed ritual. In all such cases, accordingly, we may not improperly describe the eating of the new fruits as a sacrament or communion with a deity, or at all events with a powerful spirit.

Among the usages which point to this conclusion are the custom of employing either new or specially reserved vessels to hold the new

fruits, and the practice of purifying the persons of the communicants before it is lawful to engage in the solemn act of communion with the divinity. Of all the modes of purification adopted on these occasions none perhaps brings out the sacramental virtue of the rite so clearly as the Creek and Seminole practice of taking a purgative before swallowing the new corn. The intention is thereby to prevent the sacred food from being polluted by contact with common food in the stomach of the eater. For the same reason Catholics partake of the Eucharist fasting; and among the pastoral Masai of Eastern Africa the young warriors, who live on meat and milk exclusively, are obliged to eat nothing but milk for so many days and then nothing but meat for so many more, and before they pass from the one food to the other they must make sure that none of the old food remains in their stomachs; this they do by swallowing a very powerful purgative and emetic.

In some of the festivals which we have examined, the sacrament of first-fruits is combined with a sacrifice or presentation of them to gods or spirits, and in course of time the sacrifice of first-fruits tends to throw the sacrament into the shade, if not to supersede it. The mere fact of offering the first-fruits to the gods or spirits comes now to be thought a sufficient preparation for eating the new corn; the higher powers having received their share, man is free to enjoy the rest. This mode of viewing the new fruits implies that they are regarded no longer as themselves instinct with divine life, but merely as a gift bestowed by the gods upon man, who is bound to express his gratitude and homage to his divine benefactors by returning to them a portion of their bounty.

§ 2. *Eating the God among the Aztecs.*—The custom of eating bread sacramentally as the body of a god was practised by the Aztecs before the discovery and conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards. Twice a year, in May and December, an image of the great Mexican god Huitzilopochtli or Vitzilipuztli was made of dough, then broken in pieces, and solemnly eaten by his worshippers. The May ceremony is thus described by the historian Acosta: "The Mexicans in the month of May made their principal feast to their god Vitzilipuztli, and two days before this feast, the virgins whereof I have spoken (the which were shut up and secluded in the same temple and were as it were religious women) did mingle a quantity of the seed of beets with roasted maize, and then they did mould it with honey, making an idol of that paste in bigness like to that of wood, putting instead of eyes grains of green glass, of blue or white; and for teeth grains of maize set forth with all the ornament and furniture that I have said. This being finished, all the noblemen came and brought it an exquisite and rich garment, like unto that of the idol, wherewith they did attire it. Being thus clad and deckt, they did set it in an azured chair and in a litter to carry it on their shoulders. The morning of this feast being come, an hour before day all the maidens came forth attired in white, with new ornaments, the which that day were called the Sisters of their god

Vitzilipuztli, they came crowned with garlands of maize roasted and parched, being like unto azahar or the flower of orange; and about their necks they had great chains of the same, which went bauldrick-wise under their left arm. Their cheeks were dyed with vermilion, their arms from the elbow to the wrist were covered with red parrots' feathers." Young men, dressed in red robes and crowned like the virgins with maize, then carried the idol in its litter to the foot of the great pyramid-shaped temple, up the steep and narrow steps of which it was drawn to the music of flutes, trumpets, cornets, and drums. "While they mounted up the idol all the people stood in the court with much reverence and fear. Being mounted to the top, and that they had placed it in a little lodge of roses which they held ready, presently came the young men, which strewed many flowers of sundry kinds, wherewith they filled the temple both within and without. This done, all the virgins came out of their convent, bringing pieces of paste compounded of beets and roasted maize, which was of the same paste whereof their idol was made and compounded, and they were of the fashion of great bones. They delivered them to the young men, who carried them up and laid them at the idol's feet, wherewith they filled the whole place that it could receive no more. They called these morsels of paste the flesh and bones of Vitzilipuztli. Having laid abroad these bones, presently came all the ancients of the temple, priests, Levites, and all the rest of the ministers, according to their dignities and antiquities (for herein there was a strict order amongst them) one after another, with their veils of diverse colours and works, every one according to his dignity and office, having garlands upon their heads and chains of flowers about their necks; after them came their gods and goddesses whom they worshipped, of diverse figures, attired in the same livery; then putting themselves in order about those morsels and pieces of paste, they used certain ceremonies with singing and dancing. By means whereof they were blessed and consecrated for the flesh and bones of this idol. This ceremony and blessing (whereby they were taken for the flesh and bones of the idol) being ended, they honoured those pieces in the same sort as their god. ... All the city came to this goodly spectacle, and there was a commandment very strictly observed throughout all the land, that the day of the feast of the idol of Vitzilipuztli they should eat no other meat but this paste, with honey, whereof the idol was made. And this should be eaten at the point of day, and they should drink no water nor any other thing till after noon: they held it for an ill sign, yea, for sacrilege to do the contrary: but after the ceremonies ended, it was lawful for them to eat anything. During the time of this ceremony they hid the water from their little children, admonishing all such as had the use of reason not to drink any water; which, if they did, the anger of God would come upon them, and they should die, which they did observe very carefully and strictly. The ceremonies, dancing, and sacrifice ended, the went to unclothe themselves, and the priests and superiors of the temple took the idol of paste, which they spoiled of all the

ornaments it had, and made many pieces, as well of the idol itself as of the truncheons which they consecrated, and then they gave them to the people in manner of a communion, beginning with the greater, and continuing unto the rest, both men, women, and little children, who received it with such tears, fear, and reverence as it was an admirable thing, saying that they did eat the flesh and bones of God, wherewith they were grieved. Such as had any sick folks demanded thereof for them, and carried it with great reverence and veneration."

From this interesting passage we learn that the ancient Mexicans, even before the arrival of Christian missionaries, were fully acquainted with the doctrine of transubstantiation and acted upon it in the solemn rites of their religion. They believed that by consecrating bread their priests could turn it into the very body of their god, so that all who thereupon partook of the consecrated bread entered into a mystic communion with the deity by receiving a portion of his divine substance into themselves. The doctrine of transubstantiation, or the magical conversion of bread into flesh, was also familiar to the Aryans of ancient India long before the spread and even the rise of Christianity. The Brahmans taught that the rice-cakes offered in sacrifice were substitutes for human beings, and that they were actually converted into the real bodies of men by the manipulation of the priest. We read that "when it (the rice-cake) still consists of rice-meal, it is the hair. When he pours water on it, it becomes skin. When he mixes it, it becomes flesh: for then it becomes consistent; and consistent also is the flesh. When it is baked, it becomes bone: for then it becomes somewhat hard; and hard is the bone. And when he is about to take it off (the fire) and sprinkles it with butter, he changes it into marrow. This is the completeness which they call the fivefold animal sacrifice."

Now, too, we can perfectly understand why on the day of their solemn communion with the deity the Mexicans refused to eat any other food than the consecrated bread which they revered as the very flesh and bones of their God, and why up till noon they might drink nothing at all, not even water. They feared no doubt to defile the portion of God in their stomachs by contact with common things. A similar pious fear led the Creek and Seminole Indians, as we saw, to adopt the more thoroughgoing expedient of rinsing out their bodies by a strong purgative before they dared to partake of the sacrament of first-fruits.

At the festival of the winter solstice in December the Aztecs killed their god Huitzilopochtli in effigy first and ate him afterwards. As a preparation for this solemn ceremony an image of the deity in the likeness of a man was fashioned out of seeds of various sorts, which were kneaded into a dough with the blood of children. The bones of the god were represented by pieces of acacia wood. This image was placed on the chief altar of the temple, and on the day of the festival the king offered incense to it. Early next day it was taken down and set on its feet in a great hall. Then a priest, who bore the name

and acted the part of the god Quetzalcoatl, took a flint-tipped dart and hurled it into the breast of the dough-image, piercing it through and through. This was called "killing the god Huitzilopochtli so that his body might be eaten." One of the priests cut out the heart of the image and gave it to the king to eat. The rest of the image was divided into minute pieces, of which every man great and small, down to the male children in the cradle, receive one to eat. But no woman might taste a morsel. The ceremony was called *teoqualo*, that is, "god is eaten."

At another festival the Mexicans made little images like men, which stood for the cloud-capped mountains. These images were moulded of a paste of various seeds and were dressed in paper ornaments. Some people fashioned five, others ten, others as many as fifteen of them. Having been made, they were placed in the oratory of each house and worshipped. Four times in the course of the night offerings of food were brought to them in tiny vessels; and people sang and played the flute before them through all the hours of darkness. At break of day the priests stabbed the images with a weaver's instrument, cut off their heads, and tore out their hearts, which they presented to the master of the house on a green saucer. The bodies of the images were then eaten by all the family, especially by the servants, "in order that by eating them they might be preserved from certain distempers, to which those persons who were negligent of worship to those deities conceived themselves to be subject."

§ 3. *Many Manii at Aricia.*—We are now able to suggest an explanation of the proverb "There are many Manii at Aricia." Certain loaves made in the shape of men were called by the Romans *maniae*, and it appears that this kind of loaf was especially made at Aricia. Now, Mania, the name of one of these loaves, was also the name of the Mother or Grandmother of Ghosts, to whom woollen effigies of men and women were dedicated at the festival of the Compitalia. These effigies were hung at the doors of all the houses in Rome; one effigy was hung up for every free person in the house, and one effigy, of a different kind, for every slave. The reason was that on this day the ghosts of the dead were believed to be going about, and it was hoped that, either out of good nature or through simple inadvertence, they would carry off the effigies at the door instead of the living people in the house. According to tradition, these woollen figures were substitutes for a former custom of sacrificing human beings. Upon data so fragmentary and uncertain, it is impossible to build with confidence; but it seems worth suggesting that the loaves in human form, which appear to have been baked at Aricia, were sacramental bread, and that in the old days, when the divine King of the Wood was annually slain, loaves were made in his image, like the paste figures of the gods in Mexico, and were eaten sacramentally by his worshippers. The Mexican sacraments in honour of Huitzilopochtli were also accompanied by the sacrifice of human victims. The tradition that the founder of the sacred grove at Aricia

was a man named Manius, from whom many Manii were descended, would thus be an etymological myth invented to explain the name *maniae* as applied to these sacramental loaves. A dim recollection of the original connexion of the loaves with human sacrifices may perhaps be traced in the story that the effigies dedicated to Mania at the Compitalia were substitutes for human victims. The story itself, however, is probably devoid of foundation, since the practice of putting up dummies to divert the attention of ghosts or demons from living people is not uncommon.

For example, the Tibetans stand in fear of innumerable earth-demons, all of whom are under the authority of Old Mother Khön-ma. This goddess, who may be compared to the Roman Mania, the Mother or Grandmother of Ghosts, is dressed in golden-yellow robes, holds a golden noose in her hand, and rides on a ram. In order to bar the dwelling-house against the foul fiends, of whom Old Mother Khön-ma is mistress, an elaborate structure somewhat resembling a chandelier is fixed above the door on the outside of the house. It contains a ram's skull, a variety of precious objects such as gold-leaf, silver, and turquoise, also some dry food, such as rice, wheat, and pulse, and finally images or pictures of a man, a woman, and a house. "The object of these figures of a man, wife, and house is to deceive the demons should they still come in spite of this offering, and to mislead them into the belief that the foregoing pictures are the inmates of the house, so that they may wreak their wrath on these bits of wood and to save the real human occupants." When all is ready, a priest prays to Old Mother Khön-ma that she would be pleased to accept these dainty offerings and to close the open doors of the earth, in order that the demons may not come forth to infest and injure the household.

Again, effigies are often employed as a means of preventing or curing sickness; the demons of disease either mistake the effigies for living people or are persuaded or compelled to enter them, leaving the real men and women well and whole. Thus the Alfoors of Minahassa, in Celebes, will sometimes transport a sick man to another house, while they leave on his bed a dummy made up of a pillow and clothes. This dummy the demon is supposed to mistake for the sick man, who consequently recovers. Cure or prevention of this sort seems to find especial favour with the natives of Borneo. Thus, when an epidemic is raging among them, the Dyaks of the Katoengouw River set up wooden images at their doors in the hope that the demons of the plague may be deluded into carrying off the effigies instead of the people. Among the Oloh Ngadju of Borneo, when a sick man is supposed to be suffering from the assaults of a ghost, puppets of dough or rice-meal are made and thrown under the house as substitutes for the patient, who thus rids himself of the ghost. In certain of the western districts of Borneo if a man is taken suddenly and violently sick, the physician, who in this part of the world is generally an old woman, fashions a wooden image and brings it seven times into contact with the sufferer's head, while she says: "This image serves to take the place of the sick man;

sickness, pass over into the image." Then, with some rice, salt, and tobacco in a little basket, the substitute is carried to the spot where the evil spirit is supposed to have entered into the man. There it is set upright on the ground, after the physician has invoked the spirit as follows: "O devil, here is an image which stands instead of the sick man. Release the soul of the sick man and plague the image, for it is indeed prettier and better than he." Batak magicians can conjure the demon of disease out of the patient's body into an image made out of a banana-tree with a human face and wrapt up in magic herbs; the image is then hurriedly removed and thrown away or buried beyond the boundaries of the village. Sometimes the image, dressed as a man or a woman according to the sex of the patient, is deposited at a cross-road or other thoroughfare, in the hope that some passer-by, seeing it, may start and cry out, "Ah! So-and-So is dead"; for such an exclamation is supposed to delude the demon of disease into a belief that he has accomplished his fell purpose, so he takes himself off and leaves the sufferer to get well. The Mai Darat, a Sakai tribe of the Malay Peninsula, attribute all kinds of diseases to the agency of spirits which they call *nyani;* fortunately, however, the magician can induce these maleficent beings to come out of the sick person and take up their abode in rude figures of grass, which are hung up outside the houses in little bell-shaped shrines decorated with peeled sticks. During an epidemic of small-pox the Ewe negroes will sometimes clear a space outside of the town, where they erect a number of low mounds and cover them with as many little clay figures as there are people in the place. Pots of food and water are also set out for the refreshment of the spirit of small-pox who, it is hoped, will take the clay figures and spare the living folk; and to make assurance doubly sure the road into the town is barricaded against him.

With these examples before us we may surmise that the woollen effigies, which at the festival of the Compitalia might be seen hanging at the doors of all the houses in ancient Rome, were not substitutes for human victims who had formerly been sacrificed at this season, but rather vicarious offerings presented to the Mother or Grandmother of Ghosts, in the hope that on her rounds through the city she would accept or mistake the effigies for the inmates of the house and so spare the living for another year. It is possible that the puppets made of rushes, which in the month of May the pontiffs and Vestal Virgins annually threw into the Tiber from the old Sublician bridge at Rome, had originally the same significance; that is, they may have been designed to purge the city from demoniac influence by diverting the attention of the demons from human beings to the puppets and then toppling the whole uncanny crew, neck and crop, into the river, which would soon sweep them far out to sea. In precisely the same way the natives of Old Calabar used periodically to rid their town of the devils which infested it by luring the unwary demons into a number of lamentable scarecrows, which they afterwards flung into the river. This interpretation of the Roman custom is supported to some extent

by the evidence of Plutarch, who speaks of the ceremony as "the greatest of purifications."

CHAPTER LI

HOMOEOPATHIC MAGIC OF A FLESH DIET

THE practice of killing a god has now been traced amongst peoples who have reached the agricultural stage of society. We have seen that the spirit of the corn, or of other cultivated plants, is commonly represented either in human or in animal form, and that in some places a custom has prevailed of killing annually either the human or the animal representative of the god. One reason for thus killing the corn-spirit in the person of his representative has been given implicitly in an earlier part of this work: we may suppose that the intention was to guard him or her (for the corn-spirit is often feminine) from the enfeeblement of old age by transferring the spirit, while still hale and hearty, to the person of a youthful and vigorous successor. Apart from the desirability of renewing his divine energies, the death of the corn-spirit may have been deemed inevitable under the sickles or the knives of the reapers, and his worshippers may accordingly have felt bound to acquiesce in the sad necessity. But, further, we have found a widespread custom of eating the god sacramentally, either in the shape of the man or animal who represents the god, or in the shape of bread made in human or animal form. The reasons for thus partaking of the body of the god are, from the primitive standpoint, simple enough. The savage commonly believes that by eating the flesh of an animal or man he acquires not only the physical, but even the moral and intellectual qualities which were characteristic of that animal or man; so when the creature is deemed divine, our simple savage naturally expects to absorb a portion of its divinity along with its material substance. It may be well to illustrate by instances this common faith in the acquisition of virtues or vices of many kinds through the medium of animal food, even when there is no pretence that the viands consist of the body or blood of a god. The doctrine forms part of the widely ramified system of sympathetic or homoeopathic magic.

Thus, for example, the Creeks, Cherokee, and kindred tribes of North American Indians "believe that nature is possest of such a property as to transfuse into men and animals the qualities, either of the food they use, or of those objects that are presented to their senses; he who feeds on venison is, according to their physical system, swifter and more sagacious than the man who lives on the flesh of the clumsy bear, or helpless dunghill fowls, the slow-footed tame cattle, or the heavy wallowing swine. This is the reason that several of their old men recommend, and say, that formerly their greatest chieftains observed a constant rule in their diet, and seldom ate of any animal

of a gross quality, or heavy motion of body, fancying it conveyed a dullness through the whole system, and disabled them from exerting themselves with proper vigour in their martial, civil, and religious duties." The Zaparo Indians of Ecuador "will, unless from necessity, in most cases not eat any heavy meats, such as tapir and peccary, but confine themselves to birds, monkeys, deer, fish, etc., principally because they argue that the heavier meats make them unwieldy, like the animals who supply the flesh, impeding their agility, and unfitting them for the chase." Similarly some of the Brazilian Indians would eat no beast, bird, or fish that ran, flew, or swam slowly, lest by partaking of its flesh they should lose their ability and be unable to escape from their enemies. The Caribs abstained from the flesh of pigs lest it should cause them to have small eyes like pigs; and they refused to partake of tortoises from a fear that if they did so they would become heavy and stupid like the animal. Among the Fans of West Africa men in the prime of life never eat tortoises for a similar reason; they imagine that if they did so, their vigour and fleetness of foot would be gone. But old men may eat tortoises freely, because having already lost the power of running they can take no harm from the flesh of the slow-footed creature.

While many savages thus fear to eat the flesh of slow-footed animals lest they should themselves become slow-footed, the Bushmen of South Africa purposely ate the flesh of such creatures, and the reason which they gave for doing so exhibits a curious refinement of savage philosophy. They imagined that the game which they pursued would be influenced sympathetically by the food in the body of the hunter, so that if he had eaten of swift-footed animals, the quarry would be swift-footed also and would escape him; whereas if he had eaten of slow-footed animals, the quarry would also be slow-footed, and he would be able to overtake and kill it. For that reason hunters of gemsbok particularly avoided eating the flesh of the swift and agile springbok; indeed they would not even touch it with their hands, because they believed the springbok to be a very lively creature which did not go to sleep at night, and they thought that if they ate springbok, the gemsbok which they hunted would likewise not be willing to go to sleep, even at night. How, then, could they catch it?

The Namaquas abstain from eating the flesh of hares, because they think it would make them faint-hearted as a hare. But they eat the flesh of the lion, or drink the blood of the leopard or lion, to get the courage and strength of these beasts. The Bushmen will not give their children a jackal's heart to eat, lest it should make them timid like the jackal; but they give them a leopard's heart to eat to make them brave like the leopard. When a Wagogo man of East Africa kills a lion, he eats the heart in order to become brave like a lion; but he thinks that to eat the heart of a hen would make him timid. When a serious disease has attacked a Zulu kraal, the medicine-man takes the bone of a very old dog, or the bone of an old cow, bull, or other very old animal, and administers it to the

healthy as well as to the sick people, in order that they may live to be as old as the animal of whose bone they have partaken. So to restore the aged Aeson to youth, the witch Medea infused into his veins a decoction of the liver of the long-lived deer and the head of a crow that had outlived nine generations of men.

Among the Dyaks of North-West Borneo young men and warriors may not eat venison, because it would make them as timid as deer; but the women and very old men are free to eat it. However, among the Kayans of the same region, who share the same view as to the ill effect of eating venison, men will partake of the dangerous viand provided it is cooked in the open air, for then the timid spirit of the animal is supposed to escape at once into the jungle and not to enter into the eater. The Aino believe that the heart of the water-ousel is exceedingly wise, and that in speech the bird is most eloquent. Therefore whenever he is killed, he should be at once torn open and his heart wrenched out and swallowed before it has time to grow cold or suffer damage of any kind. If a man swallows it thus, he will become very fluent and wise, and will be able to argue down all his adversaries. In Northern India people fancy that if you eat the eyeballs of an owl you will be able like an owl to see in the dark.

When the Kansas Indians were going to war, a feast used to be held in the chief's hut, and the principal dish was dog's flesh, because, said the Indians, the animal who is so brave that he will let himself be cut in pieces in defence of his master, must needs inspire valour. Men of the Buru and Aru Islands, East Indies, eat the flesh of dogs in order to be bold and nimble in war. Amongst the Papuans of the Port Moresby and Motumotu districts, New Guinea, young lads eat strong pig, wallaby, and large fish, in order to acquire the strength of the animal or fish. Some of the natives of Northern Australia fancy that by eating the flesh of the kangaroo or emu they are enabled to jump or run faster than before. The Miris of Assam prize tiger's flesh as food for men; it gives them strength and courage. But "it is not suited for women; it would make them too strong-minded." In Corea the bones of tigers fetch a higher price than those of leopards as a means of inspiring courage. A Chinaman in Seoul bought and ate a whole tiger to make himself brave and fierce. In Norse legend, Ingiald, son of King Aunund, was timid in his youth, but after eating the heart of a wolf he became very bold; Hialto gained strength and courage by eating the heart of a bear and drinking its blood.

In Morocco lethargic patients are given ants to swallow, and to eat lion's flesh will make a coward brave; but people abstain from eating the hearts of fowls, lest thereby they should be rendered timid. When a child is late in learning to speak, the Turks of Central Asia will give it the tongues of certain birds to eat. A North American Indian thought that brandy must be a decoction of hearts and tongues, "because," said he, "after drinking it I fear nothing, and I talk wonderfully." In Java there is a tiny earthworm which now and then utters a shrill sound like that of the alarum of a small clock.

Hence when a public dancing girl has screamed herself hoarse in the exercise of her calling, the leader of the troop makes her eat some of these worms, in the belief that thus she will regain her voice and will, after swallowing them, be able to scream as shrilly as eevr. The people of Darfur, in Central Africa, think that the liver is the seat of the soul, and that a man may enlarge his soul by eating the liver of an animal. "Whenever an animal is killed its liver is taken out and eaten, but the people are most careful not to touch it with their hands, as it is considered sacred; it is cut up in small pieces and eaten raw, the bits being conveyed to the mouth on the point of a knife, or the sharp point of a stick. Any one who may accidentally touch the liver is strictly forbidden to partake of it, which prohibition is regarded as a great misfortune for him." Women are not allowed to eat liver, because they have no soul.

Again, the flesh and blood of dead men are commonly eaten and drunk to inspire bravery, wisdom, or other qualities for which the men themselves were remarkable, or which are supposed to have their special seat in the particular part eaten. Thus among the mountain tribes of South-Eastern Africa there are ceremonies by which the youths are formed into guilds or lodges, and among the rites of initiation there is one which is intended to infuse courage, intelligence, and other qualities into the novices. Whenever an enemy who has behaved with conspicuous bravery is killed, his liver, which is considered the seat of valour; his ears, which are supposed to be the seat of intelligence; the skin of his forehead, which is regarded as the seat of perseverance; his testicles, which are held to be the seat of strength; and other members, which are viewed as the seat of other virtues, are cut from his body and baked to cinders. The ashes are carefully kept in the horn of a bull, and, during the ceremonies observed at circumcision, are mixed with other ingredients into a kind of paste, which is administered by the tribal priest to the youths. By this means the strength, valour, intelligence, and other virtues of the slain are believed to be imparted to the eaters. When Basutos of the mountains have killed a very brave foe, they immediately cut out his heart and eat it, because this is supposed to give them his courage and strength in battle. When Sir Charles M'Carthy was killed by the Ashantees in 1824, it is said that his heart was devoured by the chiefs of the Ashantee army, who hoped by this means to imbibe his courage. His flesh was dried and parcelled out among the lower officers for the same purpose, and his bones were long kept at Coomassie as national fetishes. The Nauras Indians of New Granada ate the hearts of Spaniards when they had the opportunity, hoping thereby to make themselves as dauntless as the dreaded Castilian chivalry. The Sioux Indians used to reduce to powder the heart of a valiant enemy and swallow the powder, hoping thus to appropriate the dead man's valour.

But while the human heart is thus commonly eaten for the sake of imbuing the eater with the qualities of its original owner, it is not,

as we have already seen, the only part of the body which is consumed for this purpose. Thus warriors of the Theddora and Ngarigo tribes of South-Eastern Australia used to eat the hands and feet of their slain enemies, believing that in this way they acquired some of the qualities and courage of the dead. The Kamilaroi of New South Wales ate the liver as well as the heart of a brave man to get his courage. In Tonquin also there is a popular superstition that the liver of a brave man makes brave any who partake of it. With a like intent the Chinese swallow the bile of notorious bandits who have been executed. The Dyaks of Sarawak used to eat the palms of the hands and the flesh of the knees of the slain in order to steady their own hands and strengthen their own knees. The Tolalaki, notorious head-hunters of Central Celebes, drink the blood and eat the brains of their victims that they may become brave. The Italones of the Philippine Islands drink the blood of their slain enemies, and eat part of the back of their heads and of their entrails raw to acquire their courage. For the same reason the Efugaos, another tribe of the Philippines, suck the brains of their foes. In like manner the Kai of German New Guinea eat the brains of the enemies they kill in order to acquire their strength. Among the Kimbunda of Western Africa, when a new king succeeds to the throne, a brave prisoner of war is killed in order that the king and nobles may eat his flesh, and so acquire his strength and courage. The notorious Zulu chief Matuana drank the gall of thirty chiefs, whose people he had destroyed, in the belief that it would make him strong. It is a Zulu fancy that by eating the centre of the forehead and the eyebrow of an enemy they acquire the power of looking steadfastly at a foe. Before every warlike expedition the people of Minahassa in Celebes used to take the locks of hair of a slain foe and dabble them in boiling water to extract the courage; this infusion of bravery was then drunk by the warriors. In New Zealand "the chief was an *atua* [god], but there were powerful and powerless gods; each naturally sought to make himself one of the former; the plan therefore adopted was to incorporate the spirits of others with their own; thus, when a warrior slew a chief, he immediately gouged out his eyes and swallowed them, the *atua tonga*, or divinity, being supposed to reside in that organ; thus he not only killed the body, but also possessed himself of the soul of his enemy, and consequently the more chiefs he slew the greater did his divinity become."

It is now easy to understand why a savage should desire to partake of the flesh of an animal or man whom he regards as divine. By eating the body of the god he shares in the god's attributes and powers. And when the god is a corn-god, the corn is his proper body; when he is a vine-god, the juice of the grape is his blood; and so by eating the bread and drinking the wine the worshipper partakes of the real body and blood of his god. Thus the drinking of wine in the rites of a vine-god like Dionysus is not an act of revelry, it is a solemn sacrament. Yet a time comes when reasonable men find it

hard to understand how any one in his senses can suppose that by eating bread or drinking wine he consumes the body or blood of a deity. "When we call corn Ceres and wine Bacchus," says Cicero, "we use a common figure of speech; but do you imagine that anybody is so insane as to believe that the thing he feeds upon is a god?"

CHAPTER LII

KILLING THE DIVINE ANIMAL

§ 1. *Killing the Sacred Buzzard.*—In the preceding chapters we saw that many communities which have progressed so far as to subsist mainly by agriculture have been in the habit of killing and eating their farinaceous deities either in their proper form of corn, rice, and so forth, or in the borrowed shapes of animals and men. It remains to show that hunting and pastoral tribes, as well as agricultural peoples, have been in the habit of killing the beings whom they worship. Among the worshipful beings or gods, if indeed they deserve to be dignified by that name, whom hunters and shepherds adore and kill are animals pure and simple, not animals regarded as embodiments of other supernatural beings. Our first example is drawn from the Indians of California, who living in a fertile country under a serene and temperate sky, nevertheless rank near the bottom of the savage scale. The Acagchemem tribe adored the great buzzard, and once a year they celebrated a great festival called *Panes* or bird-feast in its honour. The day selected for the festival was made known to the public on the evening before its celebration and preparations were at once made for the erection of a special temple (*vanquech*), which seems to have been a circular or oval enclosure of stakes with the stuffed skin of a coyote or prairie-wolf set up on a hurdle to represent the god Chinigchinich. When the temple was ready, the bird was carried into it in solemn procession and laid on an altar erected for the purpose. Then all the young women, whether married or single, began to run to and fro, as if distracted, some in one direction and some in another, while the elders of both sexes remained silent spectators of the scene, and the captains, tricked out in paint and feathers, danced round their adored bird. These ceremonies being concluded, they seized upon the bird and carried it to the principal temple, all the assembly uniting in the grand display, and the captains dancing and singing at the head of the procession. Arrived at the temple, they killed the bird without losing a drop of its blood. The skin was removed entire and preserved with the feathers as a relic or for the purpose of making the festal garment or *paelt*. The carcase was buried in a hole in the temple, and the old women gathered round the grave weeping and moaning bitterly, while they threw various kinds of seeds or pieces of food on it, crying out, "Why did you run

away? Would you not have been better with us? you would have made *pinole* (a kind of gruel) as we do, and if you had not run away, you would not have become a *Panes*," and so on. When this ceremony was concluded, the dancing was resumed and kept up for three days and nights. They said that the *Panes* was a woman who had run off to the mountains and there been changed into a bird by the god Chinigchinich. They believed that though they sacrificed the bird annually, she came to life again and returned to her home in the mountains. Moreover, they thought that "as often as the bird was killed, it became multiplied; because every year all the different Capitanes celebrated the same feast of *Panes*, and were firm in the opinion that the birds sacrificed were but one and the same female."

The unity in multiplicity thus postulated by the Californians is very noticeable and helps to explain their motive for killing the divine bird. The notion of the life of a species as distinct from that of an individual, easy and obvious as it seems to us, appears to be one which the Californian savage cannot grasp. He is unable to conceive the life of the species otherwise than as an individual life, and therefore as exposed to the same dangers and calamities which menace and finally destroy the life of the individual. Apparently he imagines that a species left to itself will grow old and die like an individual, and that therefore some step must be taken to save from extinction the particular species which he regards as divine. The only means he can think of to avert the catastrophe is to kill a member of the species in whose veins the tide of life is still running strong and has not yet stagnated among the fens of old age. The life thus diverted from one channel will flow, he fancies, more freshly and freely in a new one; in other words, the slain animal will revive and enter on a new term of life with all the spring and energy of youth. To us this reasoning is transparently absurd, but so too is the custom. A similar confusion, it may be noted, between the individual life and the life of the species was made by the Samoans. Each family had for its god a particular species of animal; yet the death of one of these animals, for example an owl, was not the death of the god, "he was supposed to be yet alive, and incarnate in all the owls in existence."

§ 2. *Killing the Sacred Ram.*—The rude Californian rite which we have just considered has a close parallel in the religion of ancient Egypt. The Thebans and all other Egyptians who worshipped the Theban god Ammon held rams to be sacred, and would not sacrifice them. But once a year at the festival of Ammon they killed a ram, skinned it, and clothed the image of the god in the skin. Then they mourned over the ram and buried it in a sacred tomb. The custom was explained by a story that Zeus had once exhibited himself to Hercules clad in the fleece and wearing the head of a ram. Of course the ram in this case was simply the beast-god of Thebes, as the wolf was the beast-god of Lycopolis, and the goat was the beast-god of Mendes. In other words, the ram was Ammon himself. On the monuments, it is true, Ammon appears in semi-human form with

the body of a man and the head of a ram. But this only shows that he was in the usual chrysalis state through which beast-gods regularly pass before they emerge as full-blown anthropomorphic gods. The ram, therefore, was killed, not as a sacrifice to Ammon, but as the god himself, whose identity with the beast is plainly shown by the custom of clothing his image in the skin of the slain ram. The reason for thus killing the ram-god annually may have been that which I have assigned for the general custom of killing a god and for the special Californian custom of killing the divine buzzard. As applied to Egypt, this explanation is supported by the analogy of the bull-god Apis, who was not suffered to outlive a certain term of years. The intention of thus putting a limit to the life of the human god was, as I have argued, to secure him from the weakness and frailty of age. The same reasoning would explain the custom—probably an older one—of putting the beast-god to death annually, as was done with the ram of Thebes.

One point in the Theban ritual—the application of the skin to the image of the god—deserves particular attention. If the god was at first the living ram, his representation by an image must have originated later. But how did it originate? One answer to this question is perhaps furnished by the practice of preserving the skin of the animal which is slain as divine. The Californians, as we have seen, preserved the skin of the buzzard; and the skin of the goat, which is killed on the harvest-field as a representative of the corn-spirit, is kept for various superstitious purposes. The skin in fact was kept as a token or memorial of the god, or rather as containing in it a part of the divine life, and it had only to be stuffed or stretched upon a frame to become a regular image of him. At first an image of this kind would be renewed annually, the new image being provided by the skin of the slain animal. But from annual images to permanent images the transition is easy. We have seen that the older custom of cutting a new May-tree every year was superseded by the practice of maintaining a permanent May-pole, which was, however, annually decked with fresh leaves and flowers, and even surmounted each year by a fresh young tree. Similarly when the stuffed skin, as a representative of the god, was replaced by a permanent image of him in wood, stone, or metal, the permanent image was annually clad in the fresh skin of the slain animal. When this stage had been reached, the custom of killing the ram came naturally to be interpreted as a sacrifice offered to the image, and was explained by a story like that of Ammon and Hercules.

§ 3. *Killing the Sacred Serpent.*—West Africa appears to furnish another example of the annual killing of a sacred animal and the preservation of its skin. The negroes of Issapoo, in the island of Fernando Po, regard the cobra-capella as their guardian deity, who can do them good or ill, bestow riches or inflict disease and death. The skin of one of these reptiles is hung tail downwards from a branch of the highest tree in the public square, and the placing of it on the

tree is an annual ceremony. As soon as the ceremony is over, all children born within the past year are carried out and their hands made to touch the tail of the serpent's skin. The latter custom is clearly a way of placing the infants under the protection of the tribal god. Similarly in Senegambia a python is expected to visit every child of the Python clan within eight days after birth; and the Psylli, a Snake clan of ancient Africa, used to expose their infants to snakes in the belief that the snakes would not harm true-born children of the clan.

§ 4. *Killing the Sacred Turtles.*—In the Californian, Egyptian, and Fernando Po customs the worship of the animal seems to have no relation to agriculture, and may therefore be presumed to date from the hunting or pastoral stage of society. The same may be said of the following custom, though the Zuni Indians of New Mexico, who practise it, are now settled in walled villages or towns of a peculiar type, and practise agriculture and the arts of pottery and weaving. But the Zuni custom is marked by certain features which appear to place it in a somewhat different class from the preceding cases. It may be well therefore to describe it at full length in the words of an eye-witness.

"With midsummer the heat became intense. My brother [*i.e.* adopted Indian brother] and I sat, day after day, in the cool under-rooms of our house,—the latter [*sic*] busy with his quaint forge and crude appliances, working Mexican coins over into bangles, girdles, ear-rings, buttons, and what not, for savage ornament. Though his tools were wonderfully rude, the work he turned out by dint of combined patience and ingenuity was remarkably beautiful. One day as I sat watching him, a procession of fifty men went hastily down the hill, and off westward over the plain. They were solemnly led by a painted and shell-bedecked priest, and followed by the torch-bearing Shu-lu-wit-si or God of Fire. After they had vanished, I asked old brother what it all meant.

"'They are going,' said he, 'to the city of Ka-ka and the home of our others.'

"Four days after, towards sunset, costumed and masked in the beautiful paraphernalia of the Ka-k'ok-shi, or 'Good Dance,' they returned in file up the same pathway, each bearing in his arms a basket filled with living, squirming turtles, which he regarded and carried as tenderly as a mother would her infant. Some of the wretched reptiles were carefully wrapped in soft blankets, their heads and forefeet protruding,—and, mounted on the backs of the plume-bedecked pilgrims, made ludicrous but solemn caricatures of little children in the same position. While I was at supper upstairs that evening, the governor's brother-in-law came in. He was welcomed by the family as if a messenger from heaven. He bore in his tremulous fingers one of the much abused and rebellious turtles. Paint still adhered to his hands and bare feet, which led me to infer that he had formed one of the sacred embassy.

"'So you went to Ka-thlu-el-lon, did you?' I asked.

"'E'e,' replied the weary man, in a voice husky with long chanting, as he sank, almost exhausted, on a roll of skins which had been placed for him, and tenderly laid the turtle on the floor. No sooner did the creature find itself at liberty than it made off as fast as its lame legs would take it. Of one accord, the family forsook dish, spoon, and drinking-cup, and grabbing from a sacred meal-bowl whole handfuls of the contents, hurriedly followed the turtle about the room, into dark corners, around water-jars, behind the grinding-troughs, and out into the middle of the floor again, praying and scattering meal on its back as they went. At last, strange to say, it approached the foot-sore man who had brought it.

"'Ha!' he exclaimed with emotion; 'see it comes to me again; ah, what great favours the fathers of all grant me this day,' and, passing his hand gently over the sprawling animal, he inhaled from his palm deeply and long, at the same time invoking the favour of the gods. Then he leaned his chin upon his hand, and with large, wistful eyes regarded his ugly captive as it sprawled about, blinking its meal-bedimmed eyes, and clawing the smooth floor in memory of its native element. At this juncture I ventured a question:

"'Why do you not let him go, or give him some water?'

"Slowly the man turned his eyes toward me, an odd mixture of pain, indignation, and pity on his face, while the worshipful family stared at me with holy horror.

"'Poor younger brother!' he said at last, 'know you not how precious it is? It die? It will *not* die; I tell you, it cannot die.'

"'But it will die if you don't feed it and give it water.'

"'I tell you it *cannot* die; it will only change houses to-morrow, and go back to the home of its brothers. Ah, well! How should *you* know?' he mused. Turning to the blinded turtle again: 'Ah! my poor dear lost child or parent, my sister or brother to have been! Who knows which? Maybe my own great-grandfather or mother!' And with this he fell to weeping most pathetically, and, tremulous with sobs, which were echoed by the women and children, he buried his face in his hands. Filled with sympathy for his grief, however mistaken, I raised the turtle to my lips and kissed its cold shell; then depositing it on the floor, hastily left the grief-stricken family to their sorrows. Next day, with prayers and tender beseechings, plumes, and offerings, the poor turtle was killed, and its flesh and bones were removed and deposited in the little river, that it might 'return once more to eternal life among its comrades in the dark waters of the lake of the dead.' The shell, carefully scraped and dried, was made into a dance-rattle, and, covered by a piece of buckskin, it still hangs from the smoke-stained rafters of my brother's house. Once a Navajo tried to buy it for a ladle; loaded with indignant reproaches, he was turned out of the house. Were any one to venture the suggestion that the turtle no longer lived, his remark would cause a flood of tears, and he would be reminded that it had only 'changed houses and gone to live for ever in the home of "our lost others."'"

In this custom we find expressed in the clearest way a belief in the transmigration of human souls into the bodies of turtles. The theory of transmigration is held by the Moqui Indians, who belong to the same race as the Zunis. The Moquis are divided into totem clans—the Bear clan, Deer clan, Wolf clan, Hare clan, and so on; they believe that the ancestors of the clans were bears, deer, wolves, hares, and so forth; and that at death the members of each clan become bears, deer, and so on according to the particular clan to which they belonged. The Zuni are also divided into clans, the totems of which agree closely with those of the Moquis, and one of their totems is the turtle. Thus their belief in transmigration into the turtle is probably one of the regular articles of their totem faith. What then is the meaning of killing a turtle in which the soul of a kinsman is believed to be present? Apparently the object is to keep up a communication with the other world in which the souls of the departed are believed to be assembled in the form of turtles. It is a common belief that the spirits of the dead return occasionally to their old homes; and accordingly the unseen visitors are welcomed and feasted by the living, and then sent upon their way. In the Zuni ceremony the dead are fetched home in the form of turtles, and the killing of the turtles is the way of sending back the souls to the spirit-land. Thus the general explanation given above of the custom of killing a god seems inapplicable to the Zuni custom, the true meaning of which is somewhat obscure. Nor is the obscurity which hangs over the subject entirely dissipated by a later and fuller account which we possess of the ceremony. From it we learn that the ceremony forms part of the elaborate ritual which these Indians observe at the midsummer solstice for the purpose of ensuring an abundant supply of rain for the crops. Envoys are despatched to bring "their otherselves, the tortoises," from the sacred lake Kothluwalawa, to which the souls of the dead are believed to repair. When the creatures have thus been solemnly brought to Zuni, they are placed in a bowl of water and dances are performed beside them by men in costume, who personate gods and goddesses. "After the ceremonial the tortoises are taken home by those who caught them and are hung by their necks to the rafters till morning, when they are thrown into pots of boiling water. The eggs are considered a great delicacy. The meat is seldom touched except as a medicine, which is curative for cutaneous diseases. Part of the meat is deposited in the river with *kóhakwa* (white shell beads) and turquoise beads as offerings to Council of the Gods." This account at all events confirms the inference that the tortoises are supposed to be reincarnations of the human dead, for they are called the "otherselves" of the Zuni; indeed, what else should they be than the souls of the dead in the bodies of tortoises seeing that they come from the haunted lake? As the principal object of the prayers uttered and of the dances performed at these midsummer ceremonies appears to be to procure rain for the crops, it may be that the intention of bringing the tortoises to Zuni and dancing before them is to intercede with the ancestral spirit, incarnate in the animals, that

they may be pleased to exert their power over the waters of heaven for the benefit of their living descendants.

§ 5. *Killing the Sacred Bear.*—Doubt also hangs at first sight over the meaning of the bear-sacrifice offered by the Aino or Ainu, a primitive people who are found in the Japanese island of Yezo or Yesso, as well as in Saghalien and the southern of the Kurile Islands. It is not quite easy to define the attitude of the Aino towards the bear. On the one hand they give it the name of *kamui* or "god"; but as they apply the same word to strangers, it may mean no more than a being supposed to be endowed with superhuman, or at all events extraordinary, powers. Again, it is said that "the bear is their chief divinity"; "in the religion of the Aino the bear plays a chief part"; "amongst the animals it is especially the bear which receives an idolatrous veneration"; "they worship it after their fashion"; "there is no doubt that this wild beast inspires more of the feeling which prompts worship than the inanimate forces of nature, and the Aino may be distinguished as bear-worshippers." Yet, on the other hand, they kill the bear whenever they can; "in bygone years the Ainu considered bear-hunting the most manly and useful way in which a person could possibly spend his time"; "the men spend the autumn, winter, and spring in hunting deer and bears. Part of their tribute or taxes is paid in skins, and they subsist on the dried meat"; bear's flesh is indeed one of their staple foods; they eat it both fresh and salted; and the skins of bears furnish them with clothing. In fact, the worship of which writers on this subject speak appears to be paid chiefly to the dead animal. Thus, although they kill a bear whenever they can, "in the process of dissecting the carcass they endeavor to conciliate the deity, whose representative they have slain, by making elaborate obeisances and deprecatory salutations"; "when a bear has been killed the Ainu sit down and admire it, make their salaams to it, worship it, and offer presents of *inao*"; "when a bear is trapped or wounded by an arrow, the hunters go through an apologetic or propitiatory ceremony." The skulls of slain bears receive a place of honour in their huts, or are set up on sacred posts outside the huts, and are treated with much respect: libations of millet beer, and of *sake,* an intoxicating liquor, are offered to them; and they are addressed as "divine preservers" or "precious divinities." The skulls of foxes are also fastened to the sacred posts outside the huts; they are regarded as charms against evil spirits, and are consulted as oracles. Yet it is expressly said, "The live fox is revered just as little as the bear; rather they avoid it as much as possible, considering it a wily animal." The bear can hardly, therefore, be described as a sacred animal of the Aino, nor yet as a totem; for they do not call themselves bears, and they kill and eat the animal freely. However, they have a legend of a woman who had a son by a bear; and many of them who dwell in the mountains pride themselves on being descended from a bear. Such people are called "Descendants of the bear" (*Kimun Kamui sanikiri*), and in the pride of their heart they will say, "As

for me, I am a child of the god of the mountains; I am descended from the divine one who rules in the mountains," meaning by "the god of the mountains" no other than the bear. It is therefore possible that, as our principal authority, the Rev. J. Batchelor, believes, the bear may have been the totem of an Aino clan; but even if that were so it would not explain the respect shown for the animal by the whole Aino people.

But it is the bear-festival of the Aino which concerns us here. Towards the end of winter a bear cub is caught and brought into the village. If it is very small, it is suckled by an Aino woman, but should there be no woman able to suckle it, the little animal is fed from the hand or the mouth. During the day it plays about in the hut with the children and is treated with great affection. But when the cub grows big enough to pain people by hugging or scratching them, he is shut up in a strong wooden cage, where he stays generally for two or three years, fed on fish and millet porridge, till it is time for him to be killed and eaten. But "it is a peculiarly striking fact that the young bear is not kept merely to furnish a good meal; rather he is regarded and honoured as a fetish, or even as a sort of higher being." In Yezo the festival is generally celebrated in September or October. Before it takes place the Aino apologise to their gods, alleging that they have treated the bear kindly as long as they could, now they can feed him no longer, and are obliged to kill him. A man who gives a bear-feast invites his relations and friends; in a small village nearly the whole community takes part in the feast; indeed, guests from distant villages are invited and generally come, allured by the prospect of getting drunk for nothing. The form of invitation runs somewhat as follows: "I, so and so, am about to sacrifice the dear little divine thing who resides among the mountains. My friends and masters, come ye to the feast; we will then unite in the great pleasure of sending the god away. Come." When all the people are assembled in front of the cage, an orator chosen for the purpose addresses the bear and tells it that they are about to send it forth to its ancestors. He craves pardon for what they are about to do to it, hopes it will not be angry, and comforts it by assuring the animal that many of the sacred whittled sticks (*inao*) and plenty of cakes and wine will be sent with it on the long journey. One speech of this sort which Mr. Batchelor heard ran as follows: "O thou divine one, thou wast sent into the world for us to hunt. O thou precious little divinity, we worship thee; pray hear our prayer. We have nourished thee and brought thee up with a deal of pains and trouble, all because we love thee so. Now, as thou hast grown big, we are about to send thee to thy father and mother. When thou comest to them please speak well of us, and tell them how kind we have been; please come to us again and we will sacrifice thee." Having been secured with ropes, the bear is then let out of the cage and assailed with a shower of blunt arrows in order to arouse it to fury. When it has spent itself in vain struggles, it is tied up to a stake, gagged and strangled, its neck being placed between two poles, which are then

violently compressed, all the people eagerly helping to squeeze the animal to death. An arrow is also discharged into the beast's heart by a good marksman, but so as not to shed blood, for they think that it would be very unlucky if any of the blood were to drip on the ground. However, the men sometimes drink the warm blood of the bear "that the courage and other virtues it possesses may pass into them"; and sometimes they besmear themselves and their clothes with the blood in order to ensure success in hunting. When the animal has been strangled to death, it is skinned and its head is cut off and set in the east window of the house, where a piece of its own flesh is placed under its snout, together with a cup of its own meat boiled, some millet dumplings, and dried fish. Prayers are then addressed to the dead animal; amongst other things it is sometimes invited, after going away to its father and mother, to return into the world in order that it may again be reared for sacrifice. When the bear is supposed to have finished eating its own flesh, the man who presides at the feast takes the cup containing the boiled meat, salutes it, and divides the contents between all the company present: every person, young and old alike, must taste a little. The cup is called "the cup of offering" because it has just been offered to the dead bear. When the rest of the flesh has been cooked, it is shared out in like manner among all the people, everybody partaking of at least a morsel; not to partake of the feast would be equivalent to excommunication, it would be to place the recreant outside the pale of Aino fellowship. Formerly every particle of the bear, except the bones, had to be eaten up at the banquet, but this rule is now relaxed. The head, on being detached from the skin, is set up on a long pole beside the sacred wands (*inao*) outside of the house, where it remains till nothing but the bare white skull is left. Skulls so set up are worshipped not only at the time of the festival, but very often as long as they last. The Aino assured Mr. Batchelor that they really do believe the spirits of the worshipful animals to reside in the skulls; that is why they address them as "divine preservers" and "precious divinities."

The ceremony of killing the bear was witnessed by Dr. B. Scheube on the tenth of August at Kunnui, which is a village on Volcano Bay in the island of Yezo or Yesso. As his description of the rite contains some interesting particulars not mentioned in the foregoing account, it may be worth while to summarize it.

On entering the hut he found about thirty Aino present, men, women, and children, all dressed in their best. The master of the house first offered a libation on the fireplace to the god of the fire, and the guests followed his example. Then a libation was offered to the house-god in his sacred corner of the hut. Meanwhile the housewife, who had nursed the bear, sat by herself, silent and sad, bursting now and then into tears. Her grief was obviously unaffected, and it deepened as the festival went on. Next, the master of the house and some of the guests went out of the hut and offered libations before the bear's cage. A few drops were presented to the bear in a saucer,

which he at once upset. Then the women and girls danced round the cage, their faces turned towards it, their knees slightly bent, rising and hopping on their toes. As they danced they clapped their hands and sang a monotonous song. The housewife and a few old women, who might have nursed many bears, danced tearfully, stretching out their arms to the bear, and addressing it in terms of endearment. The young folks were less affected; they laughed as well as sang. Disturbed by the noise, the bear began to rush about his cage and howl lamentably. Next libations were offered at the *inao* (*inabos*) or sacred wands which stand outside of an Aino hut. These wands are about a couple of feet high, and are whittled at the top into spiral shavings. Five new wands with bamboo leaves attached to them had been set up for the festival. This is regularly done when a bear is killed; the leaves mean that the animal may come to life again. Then the bear was let out of his cage, a rope was thrown round his neck, and he was led about in the neighbourhood of the hut. While this was being done the men, headed by a chief, shot at the beast with arrows tipped with wooden buttons. Dr. Scheube had to do so also. Then the bear was taken before the sacred wands, a stick was put in his mouth, nine men knelt on him and pressed his neck against a beam. In five minutes the animal had expired without uttering a sound. Meantime the women and girls had taken post behind the men, where they danced, lamenting, and beating the men who were killing the bear. The bear's carcase was next placed on the mat before the sacred wands; and a sword and quiver, taken from the wands, were hung round the beast's neck. Being a she-bear, it was also adorned with a necklace and ear-rings. Then food and drink were offered to it, in the shape of millet-broth, millet-cakes, and a pot of *sake*. The men now sat down on mats before the dead bear, offered libations to it, and drank deep. Meanwhile the women and girls had laid aside all marks of sorrow, and danced merrily, none more merrily than the old women. When the mirth was at its height two young Aino, who had let the bear out of his cage, mounted the roof of the hut and threw cakes of millet among the company, who all scrambled for them without distinction of age or sex. The bear was next skinned and disembowelled, and the trunk severed from the head, to which the skin was left hanging. The blood, caught in cups, was eagerly swallowed by the men. None of the women or children appeared to drink the blood, though custom did not forbid them to do so. The liver was cut in small pieces and eaten raw, with salt, the women and children getting their share. The flesh and the rest of the vitals were taken into the house to be kept till the next day but one, and then to be divided among the persons who had been present at the feast. Blood and liver were offered to Dr. Scheube. While the bear was being disembowelled, the women and girls danced the same dance which they had danced at the beginning—not, however, round the cage, but in front of the sacred wands. At this dance the old women, who had been merry a moment before, again shed tears freely. After the brain had been extracted from the bear's

head and swallowed with salt, the skull, detached from the skin, was hung on a pole beside the sacred wands. The stick with which the bear had been gagged was also fastened to the pole, and so were the sword and quiver which had been hung on the carcase. The latter were removed in about an hour, but the rest remained standing. The whole company, men and women, danced noisily before the pole; and another drinking-bout, in which the women joined, closed the festival.

Perhaps the first published account of the bear-feast of the Aino is one which was given to the world by a Japanese writer in 1652. It has been translated into French and runs thus: "When they find a young bear, they bring it home, and the wife suckles it. When it is grown they feed it with fish and fowl and kill it in winter for the sake of the liver, which they esteem an antidote to poison, the worms, colic, and disorders of the stomach. It is of a very bitter taste, and is good for nothing if the bear has been killed in summer. This butchery begins in the first Japanese month. For this purpose they put the animal's head between two long poles, which are squeezed together by fifty or sixty people, both men and women. When the bear is dead they eat his flesh, keep the liver as a medicine, and sell the skin, which is black and commonly six feet long, but the longest measure twelve feet. As soon as he is skinned, the persons who nourished the beast begin to bewail him; afterwards they make little cakes to regale those who helped them."

The Aino of Saghalien rear bear cubs and kill them with similar ceremonies. We are told that they do not look upon the bear as a god but only as a messenger whom they despatch with various commissions to the god of the forest. The animal is kept for about two years in a cage, and then killed at a festival, which always takes place in winter and at night. The day before the sacrifice is devoted to lamentation, old women relieving each other in the duty of weeping and groaning in front of the bear's cage. Then about the middle of the night or very early in the morning an orator makes a long speech to the beast, reminding him how they have taken care of him, and fed him well, and bathed him in the river, and made him warm and comfortable. "Now," he proceeds, "we are holding a great festival in your honour. Be not afraid. We will not hurt you. We will only kill you and send you to the god of the forest who loves you. We are about to offer you a good dinner, the best you have ever eaten among us, and we will all weep for you together. The Aino who will kill you is the best shot among us. There he is, he weeps and asks your forgiveness; you will feel almost nothing, it will be done so quickly. We cannot feed you always, as you will understand. We have done enough for you; it is now your turn to sacrifice yourself for us. You will ask God to send us, for the winter, plenty of otters and sables, and for the summer, seals and fish in abundance. Do not forget our messages, we love you much, and our children will never forget you." When the bear has partaken

of his last meal amid the general emotion of the spectators, the old women weeping afresh and the men uttering stifled cries, he is strapped, not without difficulty and danger, and being let out of the cage is led on leash or dragged, according to the state of his temper, thrice round his cage, then round his master's house, and lastly round the house of the orator. Thereupon he is tied up to a tree, which is decked with sacred whittled sticks (*inao*) of the usual sort; and the orator again addresses him in a long harangue, which sometimes lasts till the day is beginning to break. "Remember," he cries, "remember! I remind you of your whole life and of the services we have rendered you. It is now for you to do your duty. Do not forget what I have asked of you. You will tell the gods to give us riches, that our hunters may return from the forest laden with rare furs and animals good to eat; that our fishers may find troops of seals on the shore and in the sea, and that their nets may crack under the weight of the fish. We have no hope but in you. The evil spirits laugh at us, and too often they are unfavourable and malignant to us, but they will bow before you. We have given you food and joy and health; now we kill you in order that you may in return send riches to us and to our children." To this discourse the bear, more and more surly and agitated, listens without conviction; round and round the tree he paces and howls lamentably, till, just as the first beams of the rising sun light up the scene, an archer speeds an arrow to his heart. No sooner has he done so, than the marksman throws away his bow and flings himself on the ground, and the old men and women do the same, weeping and sobbing. Then they offer the dead beast a repast of rice and wild potatoes, and having spoken to him in terms of pity and thanked him for what he has done and suffered, they cut off his head and paws and keep them as sacred things. A banquet on the flesh and blood of the bear follows. Women were formerly excluded from it, but now they share with the men. The blood is drunk warm by all present; the flesh is boiled, custom forbids it to be roasted. And as the relics of the bear may not enter the house by the door, and Aino houses in Saghalien have no windows, a man gets up on the roof and lets the flesh, the head, and the skin down through the smoke-hole. Rice and wild potatoes are then offered to the head, and a pipe, tobacco, and matches are considerately placed beside it. Custom requires that the guests should eat up the whole animal before they depart; the use of salt and pepper at the meal is forbidden; and no morsel of the flesh may be given to the dogs. When the banquet is over, the head is carried away into the depth of the forest and deposited on a heap of bears' skulls, the bleached and mouldering relics of similar festivals in the past.

The Gilyaks, a Tunguzian people of Eastern Siberia, hold a bear-festival of the same sort once a year in January. "The bear is the object of the most refined solicitude of an entire village and plays the chief part in their religious ceremonies." An old she-bear is shot and her cub is reared, but not suckled, in the village. When the

bear is big enough he is taken from his cage and dragged through the village. But first they lead him to the bank of the river, for this is believed to ensure abundance of fish to each family. He is then taken into every house in the village, where fish, brandy, and so forth are offered to him. Some people prostrate themselves before the beast. His entrance into a house is supposed to bring a blessing; and if he snuffs at the food offered to him, this also is a blessing. Nevertheless they tease and worry, poke and tickle the animal continually, so that he is surly and snappish. After being thus taken to every house, he is tied to a peg and shot dead with arrows. His head is then cut off, decked with shavings, and placed on the table where the feast is set out. Here they beg pardon of the beast and worship him. Then his flesh is roasted and eaten in special vessels of wood finely carved. They do not eat the flesh raw nor drink the blood, as the Aino do. The brain and entrails are eaten last; and the skull, still decked with shavings, is placed on a tree near the house. Then the people sing and both sexes dance in ranks, as bears.

One of these bear-festivals was witnessed by the Russian traveller L. von Schrenck and his companions at the Gilyak village of Tebach in January 1856. From his detailed report of the ceremony we may gather some particulars which are not noticed in the briefer accounts which I have just summarised. The bear, he tells us, plays a great part in the life of all the peoples inhabiting the region of the Amoor and Siberia as far as Kamtchatka, but among none of them is his importance greater than among the Gilyaks. The immense size which the animal attains in the valley of the Amoor, his ferocity whetted by hunger, and the frequency of his appearance, all combine to make him the most dreaded beast of prey in the country. No wonder, therefore, that the fancy of the Gilyaks is busied with him and surrounds him, both in life and in death, with a sort of halo of superstitious fear. Thus, for example, it is thought that if a Gilyak falls in combat with a bear, his soul transmigrates into the body of the beast. Nevertheless his flesh has an irresistible attraction for the Gilyak palate, especially when the animal has been kept in captivity for some time and fattened on fish, which gives the flesh, in the opinion of the Gilyaks, a peculiarly delicious flavour. But in order to enjoy this dainty with impunity they deem it needful to perform a long series of ceremonies, of which the intention is to delude the living bear by a show of respect, and to appease the anger of the dead animal by the homage paid to his departed spirit. The marks of respect begin as soon as the beast is captured. He is brought home in triumph and kept in a cage, where all the villagers take it in turns to feed him. For although he may have been captured or purchased by one man, he belongs in a manner to the whole village. His flesh will furnish a common feast, and hence all must contribute to support him in his life. The length of time he is kept in captivity depends on his age. Old bears are kept only a few months; cubs are kept

till they are full-grown. A thick layer of fat on the captive bear gives the signal for the festival, which is always held in winter, generally in December but sometimes in January or February. At the festival witnessed by the Russian travellers, which lasted a good many days, three bears were killed and eaten. More than once the animals were led about in procession and compelled to enter every house in the village, where they were fed as a mark of honour, and to show that they were welcome guests. But before the beasts set out on this round of visits, the Gilyaks played at skipping-rope in presence, and perhaps, as L. von Schrenck inclined to believe, in honour of the animals. The night before they were killed, the three bears were led by moonlight a long way on the ice of the frozen river. That night no one in the village might sleep. Next day, after the animals had been again led down the steep bank to the river, and conducted thrice round the hole in the ice from which the women of the village drew their water, they were taken to an appointed place not far from the village, and shot to death with arrows. The place of sacrifice or execution was marked as holy by being surrounded with whittled sticks, from the tops of which shavings hung in curls. Such sticks are with the Gilyaks, as with the Aino, the regular symbols that accompany all religious ceremonies.

When the house has been arranged and decorated for their reception, the skins of the bears, with their heads attached to them, are brought into it, not, however, by the door, but through a window, and then hung on a sort of scaffold opposite the hearth on which the flesh is to be cooked. The boiling of the bears' flesh among the Gilyaks is done only by the oldest men, whose high privilege it is; women and children, young men and boys have no part in it. The task is performed slowly and deliberately, with a certain solemnity. On the occasion described by the Russian travellers the kettle was first of all surrounded with a thick wreath of shavings, and then filled with snow, for the use of water to cook bear's flesh is forbidden. Meanwhile a large wooden trough, richly adorned with arabesques and carvings of all sorts, was hung immediately under the snouts of the bears; on one side of the trough was carved in relief a bear, on the other side a toad. When the carcases were being cut up, each leg was laid on the ground in front of the bears, as if to ask their leave, before being placed in the kettle; and the boiled flesh was fished out of the kettle with an iron hook, and set in the trough before the bears, in order that they might be the first to taste of their own flesh. As fast, too, as the fat was cut in strips it was hung up in front of the bears, and afterwards laid in a small wooden trough on the ground before them. Last of all the inner organs of the beasts were cut up and placed in small vessels. At the same time the women made bandages out of parti-coloured rags, and after sunset these bandages were tied round the bears' snouts just below the eyes "in order to dry the tears that flowed from them."

As soon as the ceremony of wiping away poor bruin's tears had

been performed, the assembled Gilyaks set to work in earnest to devour his flesh. The broth obtained by boiling the meat had already been partaken of. The wooden bowls, platters, and spoons out of which the Gilyaks eat the broth and flesh of the bears on these occasions are always made specially for the purpose at the festival and only then; they are elaborately ornamented with carved figures of bears and other devices that refer to the animal or the festival, and the people have a strong superstitious scruple against parting with them. After the bones had been picked clean they were put back in the kettle in which the flesh had been boiled. And when the festal meal was over, an old man took his stand at the door of the house with a branch of fir in his hand, with which, as the people passed out, he gave a light blow to every one who had eaten of the bear's flesh or fat, perhaps as a punishment for their treatment of the worshipful animal. In the afternoon the women performed a strange dance. Only one woman danced at a time, throwing the upper part of her body into the oddest postures, while she held in her hands a branch of fir or a kind of wooden castanets. The other women meanwhile played an accompaniment by drumming on the beams of the house with clubs. Von Schrenk believed that after the flesh of the bear has been eaten the bones and the skull are solemnly carried out by the oldest people to a place in the forest not far from the village. There all the bones except the skull are buried. After that a young tree is felled a few inches above the ground, its stump cleft, and the skull wedged into the cleft. When the grass grows over the spot, the skull disappears from view, and that is the end of the bear.

Another description of the bear-festivals of the Gilyaks has been given us by Mr. Leo Sternberg. It agrees substantially with the foregoing accounts, but a few particulars in it may be noted. According to Mr. Sternberg, the festival is usually held in honour of a deceased relation: the next of kin either buys or catches a bear cub and nurtures it for two or three years till it is ready for the sacrifice. Only certain distinguished guests (*Narch-en*) are privileged to partake of the bear's flesh, but the host and members of his clan eat a broth made from the flesh; great quantities of this broth are prepared and consumed on the occasion. The guests of honour (*Narch-en*) must belong to the clan into which the host's daughters and the other women of his clan are married: one of these guests, usually the host's son-in-law, is entrusted with the duty of shooting the bear dead with an arrow. The skin, head, and flesh of the slain bear are brought into the house not through the door but through the smoke-hole; a quiver full of arrows is laid under the head and beside it are deposited tobacco, sugar, and other food. The soul of the bear is supposed to carry off the souls of these things with it on the far journey. A special vessel is used for cooking the bear's flesh, and the fire must be kindled by a sacred apparatus of flint and steel, which belongs to the clan and is handed down from generation to generation, but which is never used to light fires except on these solemn occasions. Of all the many viands cooked

for the consumption of the assembled people a portion is placed in a special vessel and set before the bear's head: this is called "feeding the head." After the bear has been killed, dogs are sacrificed in couples of male and female. Before being throttled, they are fed and invited to go to their lord on the highest mountain, to change their skins, and to return next year in the form of bears. The soul of the dead bear departs to the same lord, who is also lord of the primaeval forest; it goes away laden with the offerings that have been made to it, and attended by the souls of the dogs and also by the souls of the sacred whittled sticks, which figure prominently at the festival.

The Goldi, neighbours of the Gilyaks, treat the bear in much the same way. They hunt and kill it; but sometimes they capture a live bear and keep him in a cage, feeding him well and calling him their son and brother. Then at a great festival he is taken from his cage, paraded about with marked consideration, and afterwards killed and eaten. "The skull, jaw-bones, and ears are then suspended on a tree, as an antidote against evil spirits; but the flesh is eaten and much relished, for they believe that all who partake of it acquire a zest for the chase, and become courageous."

The Orotchis, another Tunguzian people of the region of the Amoor, hold bear-festivals of the same general character. Any one who catches a bear cub considers it his bounden duty to rear it in a cage for about three years, in order at the end of that time to kill it publicly and eat the flesh with his friends. The feasts being public, though organised by individuals, the people try to have one in each Orotchi village every year in turn. When the bear is taken out of his cage, he is led about by means of ropes to all the huts, accompanied by people armed with lances, bows, and arrows. At each hut the bear and bear-leaders are treated to something good to eat and drink. This goes on for several days until all the huts, not only in that village but also in the next, have been visited. The days are given up to sport and noisy jollity. Then the bear is tied to a tree or wooden pillar and shot to death by the arrows of the crowd, after which its flesh is roasted and eaten. Among the Orotchis of the Tundja River women take part in the bear-feasts, while among the Orotchis of the River Vi the women will not even touch bear's flesh.

In the treatment of the captive bear by these tribes there are features which can hardly be distinguished from worship. Such, for example, are the prayers offered to it both alive and dead; the offerings of food, including portions of its own flesh, laid before the animal's skull; and the Gilyak custom of leading the living beast to the river in order to ensure a supply of fish, and of conducting him from house to house in order that every family may receive his blessing, just as in Europe a May-tree or a personal representative of the tree-spirit used to be taken from door to door in spring for the sake of diffusing among all and sundry the fresh energies of reviving nature. Again, the solemn participation in his flesh and blood, and particularly the Aino custom of sharing the contents of the cup which had been consecrated by being

set before the dead beast, are strongly suggestive of a sacrament, and the suggestion is confirmed by the Gilyak practice of reserving special vessels to hold the flesh and cooking it on a fire kindled by a sacred apparatus which is never employed except on these religious occasions. Indeed our principal authority on Aino religion, the Rev. John Batchelor, frankly describes as worship the ceremonious respect which the Aino pay to the bear, and he affirms that the animal is undoubtedly one of their gods. Certainly the Aino appear to apply their name for god (*kamui*) freely to the bear; but, as Mr. Batchelor himself points out, that word is used with many different shades of meaning and is applied to a great variety of objects, so that from its application to the bear we cannot safely argue that the animal is actually regarded as a deity. Indeed we are expressly told that the Aino of Saghalien do not consider the bear to be a god but only a messenger to the gods, and the message with which they charge the animal at its death bears out the statement. Apparently the Gilyaks also look on the bear in the light of an envoy despatched with presents to the Lord of the Mountain, on whom the welfare of the people depends. At the same time they treat the animal as a being of a higher order than man, in fact as a minor deity, whose presence in the village, so long as he is kept and fed, diffuses blessings, especially by keeping at bay the swarms of evil spirits who are constantly lying in wait for people, stealing their goods and destroying their bodies by sickness and disease. Moreover, by partaking of the flesh, blood, or broth of the bear, the Gilyaks, the Aino, and the Goldi are all of opinion that they acquire some portion of the animal's mighty powers, particularly his courage and strength. No wonder, therefore, that they should treat so great a benefactor with marks of the highest respect and affection.

Some light may be thrown on the ambiguous attitude of the Aino to bears by comparing the similar treatment which they accord to other creatures. For example, they regard the eagle-owl as a good deity who by his hooting warns men of threatened evil and defends them against it; hence he is loved, trusted, and devoutly worshipped as a divine mediator between men and the Creator. The various names applied to him are significant both of his divinity and of his mediatorship. Whenever an opportunity offers, one of these divine birds is captured and kept in a cage, where he is greeted with the endearing titles of "Beloved god" and "Dear little divinity." Nevertheless the time comes when the dear little divinity is throttled and sent away in his capacity of mediator to take a message to the superior gods or to the Creator himself. The following is the form of prayer addressed to the eagle-owl when it is about to be sacrificed: "Beloved deity, we have brought you up because we loved you, and now we are about to send you to your father. We herewith offer you food, *inao*, wine, and cakes; take them to your parent, and he will be very pleased. When you come to him say, 'I have lived a long time among the Ainu, where an Ainu father and an Ainu mother reared me. I now come to thee. I have brought a variety of good things. I saw while living in Ainu-

land a great deal of distress. I observed that some of the people were possessed by demons, some were wounded by wild animals, some were hurt by landslides, others suffered shipwreck, and many were attacked by disease. The people are in great straits. My father, hear me, and hasten to look upon the Ainu and help them.' If you do this, your father will help us."

Again, the Aino keep eagles in cages, worship them as divinities, and ask them to defend the people from evil. Yet they offer the bird in sacrifice, and when they are about to do so they pray to him, saying: "O precious divinity, O thou divine bird, pray listen to my words. Thou dost not belong to this world, for thy home is with the Creator and his golden eagles. This being so, I present thee with these *inao* and cakes and other precious things. Do thou ride upon the *inao* and ascend to thy home in the glorious heavens. When thou arrivest, assemble the deities of thy own kind together and thank them for us for having governed the world. Do thou come again, I beseech thee, and rule over us. O my precious one, go thou quietly." Once more, the Aino revere hawks, keep them in cages, and offer them in sacrifice. At the time of killing one of them the following prayer should be addressed to the bird: "O divine hawk, thou art an expert hunter, please cause thy cleverness to descend on me." If a hawk is well treated in captivity and prayed to after this fashion when he is about to be killed, he will surely send help to the hunter.

Thus the Aino hopes to profit in various ways by slaughtering the creatures, which, nevertheless, he treats as divine. He expects them to carry messages for him to their kindred or to the gods in the upper world; he hopes to partake of their virtues by swallowing parts of their bodies or in other ways; and apparently he looks forward to their bodily resurrection in this world, which will enable him again to catch and kill them, and again to reap all the benefits which he has already derived from their slaughter. For in the prayers addressed to the worshipful bear and the worshipful eagle before they are knocked on the head the creatures are invited to come again, which seems clearly to point to a faith in their future resurrection. If any doubt could exist on this head, it would be dispelled by the evidence of Mr. Batchelor, who tells us that the Aino "are firmly convinced that the spirits of birds and animals killed in hunting or offered in sacrifice come and live again upon the earth clothed with a body; and they believe, further, that they appear here for the special benefit of men, particularly Ainu hunters." The Aino, Mr. Batchelor tells us, "confessedly slays and eats the beast that another may come in its place and be treated in like manner"; and at the time of sacrificing the creatures "prayers are said to them which form a request that they will come again and furnish viands for another feast, as if it were an honour to them to be thus killed and eaten, and a pleasure as well. Indeed such is the people's idea." These last observations, as the context shows, refer especially to the sacrifice of bears.

Thus among the benefits which the Aino anticipates from the

slaughter of the worshipful animals not the least substantial is that of gorging himself on their flesh and blood, both on the present and on many a similar occasion hereafter; and that pleasing prospect again is derived from his firm faith in the spiritual immortality and bodily resurrection of the dead animals. A like faith is shared by many savage hunters in many parts of the world and has given rise to a variety of quaint customs, some of which will be described presently. Meantime it is not unimportant to observe that the solemn festivals at which the Aino, the Gilyaks, and other tribes slaughter the tame caged bears with demonstrations of respect and sorrow, are probably nothing but an extension or glorification of similar rites which the hunter performs over any wild bear which he chances to kill in the forest. Indeed with regard to the Gilyaks we are expressly informed that this is the case. If we would understand the meaning of the Gilyak ritual, says Mr. Sternberg, "we must above all remember that the bear-festivals are not, as is usually but falsely assumed, celebrated only at the killing of a house-bear but are held on every occasion when a Gilyak succeeds in slaughtering a bear in the chase. It is true that in such cases the festival assumes less imposing dimensions, but in its essence it remains the same. When the head and skin of a bear killed in the forest are brought into the village, they are accorded a triumphal reception with music and solemn ceremonial. The head is laid on a consecrated scaffold, fed, and treated with offerings, just as at the killing of a house-bear; and the guests of honour (*Narch-en*) are also assembled. So, too, dogs are sacrificed, and the bones of the bear are preserved in the same place and with the same marks of respect as the bones of a house-bear. Hence the great winter festival is only an extension of the rite which is observed at the slaughter of every bear."

Thus the apparent contradiction in the practice of these tribes, who venerate and almost deify the animals which they habitually hunt, kill, and eat, is not so flagrant as at first sight it appears to us: the people have reasons, and some very practical reasons, for acting as they do. For the savage is by no means so illogical and unpractical as to superficial observers he is apt to seem; he has thought deeply on the questions which immediately concern him, he reasons about them, and though his conclusions often diverge very widely from ours, we ought not to deny him the credit of patient and prolonged meditation on some fundamental problems of human existence. In the present case, if he treats bears in general as creatures wholly subservient to human needs and yet singles out certain individuals of the species for homage which almost amounts to deification, we must not hastily set him down as irrational and inconsistent, but must endeavour to place ourselves at his point of view, to see things as he sees them, and to divest ourselves of the prepossessions which tinge so deeply our own views of the world. If we do so, we shall probably discover that, however absurd his conduct may appear to us, the savage nevertheless generally acts on a train of reasoning which seems to him in harmony

with the facts of his limited experience. This I propose to illustrate in the following chapter, where I shall attempt to show that the solemn ceremonial of the bear-festival among the Ainos and other tribes of North-eastern Asia is only a particularly striking example of the respect which on the principles of his rude philosophy the savage habitually pays to the animals which he kills and eats.

CHAPTER LIII

THE PROPITIATION OF WILD ANIMALS BY HUNTERS

THE explanation of life by the theory of an indwelling and practically immortal soul is one which the savage does not confine to human beings but extends to the animate creation in general. In so doing he is more liberal and perhaps more logical than the civilised man, who commonly denies to animals that privilege of immortality which he claims for himself. The savage is not so proud; he commonly believes that animals are endowed with feelings and intelligence like those of men, and that, like men, they possess souls which survive the death of their bodies either to wander about as disembodied spirits or to be born again in animal form.

Thus to the savage, who regards all living creatures as practically on a footing of equality with man, the act of killing and eating an animal must wear a very different aspect from that which the same act presents to us, who regard the intelligence of animals as far inferior to our own and deny them the possession of immortal souls. Hence on the principles of his rude philosophy the primitive hunter who slays an animal believes himself exposed to the vengeance either of its disembodied spirit or of all the other animals of the same species, whom he considers as knit together, like men, by the ties of kin and the obligations of the blood feud, and therefore as bound to resent the injury done to one of their number. Accordingly the savage makes it a rule to spare the life of those animals which he has no pressing motive for killing, at least such fierce and dangerous animals as are likely to exact a bloody vengeance for the slaughter of one of their kind. Crocodiles are animals of this sort. They are only found in hot countries, where, as a rule, food is abundant and primitive man has therefore little reason to kill them for the sake of their tough and unpalatable flesh. Hence it is a custom with some savages to spare crocodiles, or rather only to kill them in obedience to the law of blood feud, that is, as a retaliation for the slaughter of men by crocodiles. For example, the Dyaks of Borneo will not kill a crocodile unless a crocodile has first killed a man. "For why, say they, should they commit an act of aggression, when he and his kindred can so easily repay them? But should the alligator take a human life, revenge becomes a sacred duty of the living relatives, who will trap the man-

eater in the spirit of an officer of justice pursuing a criminal. Others, even then, hang back, reluctant to embroil themselves in a quarrel which does not concern them. The man-eating alligator is supposed to be pursued by a righteous Nemesis; and whenever one is caught they have a profound conviction that it must be the guilty one, or his accomplice."

Like the Dyaks, the natives of Madagascar never kill a crocodile "except in retaliation for one of their friends who has been destroyed by a crocodile. They believe that the wanton destruction of one of these reptiles will be followed by the loss of human life, in accordance with the principle of *lex talionis*." The people who live near the lake Itasy in Madagascar make a yearly proclamation to the crocodiles, announcing that they will revenge the death of some of their friends by killing as many crocodiles in return, and warning all well-disposed crocodiles to keep out of the way, as they have no quarrel with them, but only with their evil-minded relations who have taken human life. Various tribes of Madagascar believe themselves to be descended from crocodiles, and accordingly they view the scaly reptile as, to all intents and purposes, a man and a brother. If one of the animals should so far forget himself as to devour one of his human kinsfolk, the chief of the tribe, or in his absence an old man familiar with the tribal customs, repairs at the head of the people to the edge of the water, and summons the family of the culprit to deliver him up to the arm of justice. A hook is then baited and cast into the river or lake. Next day the guilty brother, or one of his family, is dragged ashore, and after his crime has been clearly brought home to him by a strict interrogation, he is sentenced to death and executed. The claims of justice being thus satisfied and the majesty of the law fully vindicated, the deceased crocodile is lamented and buried like a kinsman; a mound is raised over his relics and a stone marks the place of his head.

Again, the tiger is another of those dangerous beasts whom the savage prefers to leave alone, lest by killing one of the species he should excite the hostility of the rest. No consideration will induce a Sumatran to catch or wound a tiger except in self-defence or immediately after a tiger has destroyed a friend or relation. When a European has set traps for tigers, the people of the neighbourhood have been known to go by night to the place and explain to the animals that the traps are not set by them nor with their consent. The inhabitants of the hills near Rajamahall, in Bengal, are very averse to killing a tiger, unless one of their kinsfolk has been carried off by one of the beasts. In that case they go out for the purpose of hunting and slaying a tiger; and when they have succeeded they lay their bows and arrows on the carcase and invoke God, declaring that they slew the animal in retaliation for the loss of a kinsman. Vengeance having been thus taken, they swear not to attack another tiger except under similar provocation.

The Indians of Carolina would not molest snakes when they came

upon them, but would pass by on the other side of the path, believing that if they were to kill a serpent, the reptile's kindred would destroy some of their brethren, friends, or relations in return. So the Seminole Indians spared the rattlesnake, because they feared that the soul of the dead rattlesnake would incite its kinsfolk to take vengeance. The Cherokee regard the rattlesnake as the chief of the snake tribe and fear and respect him accordingly. Few Cherokee will venture to kill a rattlesnake, unless they cannot help it, and even then they must atone for the crime by craving pardon of the snake's ghost either in their own person or through the mediation of a priest, according to a set formula. If these precautions are neglected, the kinsfolk of the dead snake will send one of their number as an avenger of blood, who will track down the murderer and sting him to death. No ordinary Cherokee dares to kill a wolf, if he can possibly help it; for he believes that the kindred of the slain beast would surely avenge its death, and that the weapon with which the deed had been done would be quite useless for the future, unless it were cleaned and exorcised by a medicine-man. However, certain persons who know the proper rites of atonement for such a crime can kill wolves with impunity, and they are sometimes hired to do so by people who have suffered from the raids of the wolves on their cattle or fish-traps. In Jebel-Nuba, a district of the Eastern Sudan, it is forbidden to touch the nests or remove the young of a species of black birds, resembling our blackbirds, because the people believe that the parent birds would avenge the wrong by causing a stormy wind to blow, which would destroy the harvest.

But the savage clearly cannot afford to spare all animals. He must either eat some of them or starve, and when the question thus comes to be whether he or the animal must perish, he is forced to overcome his superstitious scruples and take the life of the beast. At the same time he does all he can to appease his victims and their kinsfolk. Even in the act of killing them he testifies his respect for them, endeavours to excuse or even conceal his share in procuring their death, and promises that their remains will be honourably treated. By thus robbing death of its terrors, he hopes to reconcile his victims to their fate and to induce their fellows to come and be killed also. For example, it was a principle with the Kamtchatkans never to kill a land or sea animal without first making excuses to it and begging that the animal would not take it ill. Also they offered it cedar-nuts and so forth, to make it think that it was not a victim but a guest at a feast. They believed that this hindered other animals of the same species from growing shy. For instance, after they had killed a bear and feasted on its flesh, the host would bring the bear's head before the company, wrap it in grass, and present it with a variety of trifles. Then he would lay the blame of the bear's death on the Russians, and bid the beast wreak his wrath upon them. Also he would ask the bear to inform the other bears how well he had been treated, that they too might come without fear. Seals, sea-lions,

and other animals were treated by the Kamtchatkans with the same ceremonious respect. Moreover, they used to insert sprigs of a plant resembling bear's wort in the mouths of the animals they killed; after which they would exhort the grinning skulls to have no fear but to go and tell it to their fellows, that they also might come and be caught and so partake of this splendid hospitality. When the Ostiaks have hunted and killed a bear, they cut off its head and hang it on a tree. Then they gather round in a circle and pay it divine honours. Next they run towards the carcase uttering lamentations and saying, "Who killed you? It was the Russians. Who cut off your head? It was a Russian axe. Who skinned you? It was a knife made by a Russian." They explain, too, that the feathers which sped the arrow on its flight came from the wing of a strange bird, and that they did nothing but let the arrow go. They do all this because they believe that the wandering ghost of the slain bear would attack them on the first opportunity, if they did not thus appease it. Or they stuff the skin of the slain bear with hay; and after celebrating their victory with songs of mockery and insult, after spitting on and kicking it, they set it up on its hind legs, "and then, for a considerable time, they bestow on it all the veneration due to a guardian god." When a party of Koryak have killed a bear or a wolf, they skin the beast and dress one of themselves in the skin. Then they dance round the skin-clad man, saying that it was not they who killed the animal, but some one else, generally a Russian. When they kill a fox they skin it, wrap the body in grass, and bid him go tell his companions how hospitably he has been received, and how he has received a new cloak instead of his old one. A fuller account of the Koryak ceremonies is given by a more recent writer. He tells us that when a dead bear is brought to the house, the women come out to meet it, dancing with firebrands. The bear-skin is taken off along with the head; and one of the women puts on the skin, dances in it, and entreats the bear not to be angry, but to be kind to the people. At the same time they offer meat on a wooden platter to the dead beast, saying, "Eat, friend." Afterwards a ceremony is performed for the purpose of sending the dead bear, or rather his spirit, away back to his home. He is provided with provisions for the journey in the shape of puddings or reindeer-flesh packed in a grass bag. His skin is stuffed with grass and carried round the house, after which he is supposed to depart towards the rising sun. The intention of the ceremonies is to protect the people from the wrath of the slain bear and his kinsfolk, and so to ensure success in future bear-hunts. The Finns used to try to persuade a slain bear that he had not been killed by them, but had fallen from a tree, or met his death in some other way; moreover, they held a funeral festival in his honour, at the close of which bards expatiated on the homage that had been paid to him, urging him to report to the other bears the high consideration with which he had been treated, in order that they also, following his example, might come and be slain. When the Lapps

had succeeded in killing a bear with impunity, they thanked him for not hurting them and for not breaking the clubs and spears which had given him his death wounds; and they prayed that he would not visit his death upon them by sending storms or in any other way. His flesh then furnished a feast.

The reverence of hunters for the bear whom they regularly kill and eat may thus be traced all along the northern region of the Old World from Bering's Straits to Lappland. It reappears in similar forms in North America. With the American Indians a bear hunt was an important event for which they prepared by long fasts and purgations. Before setting out they offered expiatory sacrifices to the souls of bears slain in previous hunts, and besought them to be favourable to the hunters. When a bear was killed the hunter lit his pipe, and putting the mouth of it between the bear's lips, blew into the bowl, filling the beast's mouth with smoke. Then he begged the bear not to be angry at having been killed, and not to thwart him afterwards in the chase. The carcase was roasted whole and eaten; not a morsel of the flesh might be left over. The head, painted red and blue, was hung on a post and addressed by orators, who heaped praise on the dead beast. When men of the Bear clan in the Ottawa tribe killed a bear, they made him a feast of his own flesh, and addressed him thus: "Cherish us no grudge because we have killed you. You have sense; you see that our children are hungry. They love you and wish to take you into their bodies. Is it not glorious to be eaten by the children of a chief?" Amongst the Nootka Indians of British Columbia, when a bear had been killed, it was brought in and seated before the head chief in an upright posture, with a chief's bonnet, wrought in figures, on its head, and its fur powdered over with white down. A tray of provisions was then set before it, and it was invited by words and gestures to eat. After that the animal was skinned, boiled, and eaten.

A like respect is testified for other dangerous creatures by the hunters who regularly trap and kill them. When Caffre hunters are in the act of showering spears on an elephant, they call out, "Don't kill us, great captain; don't strike or tread upon us, mighty chief." When he is dead they make their excuses to him, pretending that his death was a pure accident. As a mark of respect they bury his trunk with much solemn ceremony; for they say that "the elephant is a great lord; his trunk is his hand." Before the Amaxosa Caffres attack an elephant they shout to the animal and beg him to pardon them for the slaughter they are about to perpetrate, professing great submission to his person and explaining clearly the need they have of his tusks to enable them to procure beads and supply their wants. When they have killed him they bury in the ground, along with the end of his trunk, a few of the articles they have obtained for the ivory, thus hoping to avert some mishap that would otherwise befall them. Amongst some tribes of Eastern Africa, when a lion is killed, the carcase is brought before the king, who does homage to it by prostrating himself on the

ground and rubbing his face on the muzzle of the beast. In some parts of Western Africa if a negro kills a leopard he is bound fast and brought before the chiefs for having killed one of their peers. The man defends himself on the plea that the leopard is chief of the forest and therefore a stranger. He is then set at liberty and rewarded. But the dead leopard, adorned with a chief's bonnet, is set up in the village, where nightly dances are held in its honour. The Baganda greatly fear the ghosts of buffaloes which they have killed, and they always appease these dangerous spirits. On no account will they bring the head of a slain buffalo into a village or into a garden of plantains: they always eat the flesh of the head in the open country. Afterwards they place the skull in a small hut built for the purpose, where they pour out beer as an offering and pray to the ghost to stay where he is and not to harm them.

Another formidable beast whose life the savage hunter takes with joy, yet with fear and trembling, is the whale. After the slaughter of a whale the maritime Koryak of North-eastern Siberia hold a communal festival, the essential part of which "is based on the conception that the whale killed has come on a visit to the village; that it is staying for some time, during which it is treated with great respect; that it then returns to the sea to repeat its visit the following year; that it will induce its relatives to come along, telling them of the hospitable reception that has been accorded to it. According to the Koryak ideas, the whales, like all other animals, constitute one tribe, or rather family, of related individuals, who live in villages like the Koryak. They avenge the murder of one of their number, and are grateful for kindnesses that they may have received." When the inhabitants of the Isle of St. Mary, to the north of Madagascar, go a-whaling, they single out the young whales for attack and "humbly beg the mother's pardon, stating the necessity that drives them to kill her progeny, and requesting that she will be pleased to go below while the deed is doing, that her maternal feelings may not be outraged by witnessing what must cause her so much uneasiness." An Ajumba hunter having killed a female hippopotamus on Lake Azyingo in West Africa, the animal was decapitated and its quarters and bowels removed. Then the hunter, naked, stepped into the hollow of the ribs, and kneeling down in the bloody pool washed his whole body with the blood and excretions of the animal, while he prayed to the soul of the hippopotamus not to bear him a grudge for having killed her and so blighted her hopes of future maternity; and he further entreated the ghost not to stir up other hippopotamuses to avenge her death by butting at and capsizing his canoe.

The ounce, a leopard-like creature, is dreaded for its depredations by the Indians of Brazil. When they have caught one of these animals in a snare, they kill it and carry the body home to the village. There the women deck the carcase with feathers of many colours, put bracelets on its legs, and weep over it, saying, "I pray thee not to take vengeance on our little ones for having been caught and killed through

thine own ignorance. For it was not we who deceived thee, it was thyself. Our husbands only set the trap to catch animals that are good to eat; they never thought to take thee in it. Therefore, let not thy soul counsel thy fellows to avenge thy death on our little ones!" When a Blackfoot Indian has caught eagles in a trap and killed them, he takes them home to a special lodge, called the eagles' lodge, which has been prepared for their reception outside of the camp. Here he sets the birds in a row on the ground, and propping up their heads on a stick, puts a piece of dried meat in each of their mouths in order that the spirits of the dead eagles may go and tell the other eagles how well they are being treated by the Indians. So when Indian hunters of the Orinoco region have killed an animal, they open its mouth and pour into it a few drops of the liquor they generally carry with them, in order that the soul of the dead beast may inform its fellows of the welcome it has met with, and that they too, cheered by the prospect of the same kind reception, may come with alacrity to be killed. When a Teton Indian is on a journey, and he meets a grey spider or a spider with yellow legs, he kills it, because some evil would befall him if he did not. But he is very careful not to let the spider know that he kills it, for if the spider knew, his soul would go and tell the other spiders, and one of them would be sure to avenge the death of his relation. So in crushing the insect, the Indian says, "O Grandfather Spider, the Thunder-beings kill you." And the spider is crushed at once and believes what is told him. His soul probably runs and tells the other spiders that the Thunder-beings have killed him; but no harm comes of that. For what can grey or yellow-legged spiders do to the Thunder-beings?

But it is not merely dangerous creatures with whom the savage desires to keep on good terms. It is true that the respect which he pays to wild beasts is in some measure proportioned to their strength and ferocity. Thus the savage Stiens of Cambodia, believing that all animals have souls which roam about after their death, beg an animal's pardon when they kill it, lest its soul should come and torment them. Also they offer it sacrifices, but these sacrifices are proportioned to the size and strength of the animal. The ceremonies which they observe at the death of an elephant are conducted with much pomp and last seven days. Similar distinctions are drawn by North American Indians. "The bear, the buffalo, and the beaver are manidos [divinities] which furnish food. The bear is formidable, and good to eat. They render ceremonies to him, begging him to allow himself to be eaten, although they know he has no fancy for it. We kill you, but you are not annihilated. His head and paws are objects of homage. . . . Other animals are treated similarly from similar reasons. . . . Many of the animal manidos, not being dangerous, are often treated with contempt —the terrapin, the weasel, polecat, etc." The distinction is instructive. Animals which are feared, or are good to eat, or both, are treated with ceremonious respect; those which are neither formidable nor good to eat are despised. We have had examples of reverence paid to animals

which are both feared and eaten. It remains to prove that similar respect is shown to animals which, without being feared, are either eaten or valued for their skins.

When Siberian sable-hunters have caught a sable, no one is allowed to see it, and they think that if good or evil be spoken of the captured sable no more sables will be caught. A hunter has been known to express his belief that the sables could hear what was said of them as far off as Moscow. He said that the chief reason why the sable hunt was now so unproductive was that some live sables had been sent to Moscow. There they had been viewed with astonishment as strange animals, and the sables cannot abide that. Another, though minor, cause of the diminished take of sables was, he alleged, that the world is now much worse than it used to be, so that nowadays a hunter will sometimes hide the sable which he has got instead of putting it into the common stock. This also, said he, the sables cannot abide. Alaskan hunters preserve the bones of sables and beavers out of reach of the dogs for a year and then bury them carefully, "lest the spirits who look after the beavers and sables should consider that they are regarded with contempt, and hence no more should be killed or trapped." The Canadian Indians were equally particular not to let their dogs gnaw the bones, or at least certain of the bones, of beavers. They took the greatest pains to collect and preserve these bones, and, when the beaver had been caught in a net, they threw them into the river. To a Jesuit who argued that the beavers could not possibly know what became of their bones, the Indians replied, "You know nothing about catching beavers and yet you will be prating about it. Before the beaver is stone dead, his soul takes a turn in the hut of the man who is killing him and makes a careful note of what is done with his bones. If the bones are given to the dogs, the other beavers would get word of it and would not let themselves be caught. Whereas, if their bones are thrown into the fire or a river, they are quite satisfied; and it is particularly gratifying to the net which caught them." Before hunting the beaver they offered a solemn prayer to the Great Beaver, and presented him with tobacco; and when the chase was over, an orator pronounced a funeral oration over the dead beavers. He praised their spirit and wisdom. "You will hear no more," said he, "the voice of the chieftains who commanded you and whom you chose from among all the warrior beavers to give you laws. Your language, which the medicine-men understand perfectly, will be heard no more at the bottom of the lake. You will fight no more battles with the otters, your cruel foes. No, beavers! But your skins shall serve to buy arms; we will carry your smoked hams to our children; we will keep the dogs from eating your bones, which are so hard."

The elan, deer, and elk were treated by the American Indians with the same punctilious respect, and for the same reason. Their bones might not be given to the dogs nor thrown into the fire, nor might their fat be dropped upon the fire, because the souls of the dead

animals were believed to see what was done to their bodies and to tell it to the other beasts, living and dead. Hence, if their bodies were ill-used, the animals of that species would not allow themselves to be taken, neither in this world nor in the world to come. Among the Chiquites of Paraguay a sick man would be asked by the medicine-man whether he had not thrown away some of the flesh of the deer or turtle, and if he answered yes, the medicine-man would say, "That is what is killing you. The soul of the deer or turtle has entered into your body to avenge the wrong you did it." The Canadian Indians would not eat the embryos of the elk, unless at the close of the hunting season; otherwise the mother-elks would be shy and refuse to be caught.

In the Timor-laut islands of the Indian Archipelago the skulls of all the turtles which a fisherman has caught are hung up under his house. Before he goes out to catch another, he addresses himself to the skull of the last turtle that he killed, and having inserted betel between its jaws, he prays the spirit of the dead animal to entice its kinsfolk in the sea to come and be caught. In the Poso district of Central Celebes hunters keep the jawbones of deer and wild pigs which they have killed and hang them up in their houses near the fire. Then they say to the jawbones, "Ye cry after your comrades, that your grandfathers, or nephews, or children may not go away." Their notion is that the souls of the dead deer and pigs tarry near their jawbones and attract the souls of living deer and pigs, which are thus drawn into the toils of the hunter. Thus the wily savage employs dead animals as decoys to lure living animals to their doom.

The Lengua Indians of the Gran Chaco love to hunt the ostrich, but when they have killed one of these birds and are bringing home the carcase to the village, they take steps to outwit the resentful ghost of their victim. They think that when the first natural shock of death is passed, the ghost of the ostrich pulls himself together and makes after his body. Acting on this sage calculation, the Indians pluck feathers from the breast of the bird and strew them at intervals along the track. At every bunch of feathers the ghost stops to consider, "Is this the whole of my body or only a part of it?" The doubt gives him pause, and when at last he has made up his mind fully at all the bunches, and has further wasted valuable time by the zigzag course which he invariably pursues in going from one to another, the hunters are safe at home, and the bilked ghost may stalk in vain round about the village, which he is too timid to enter.

The Esquimaux about Bering Strait believe that the souls of dead sea-beasts, such as seals, walrus, and whales, remain attached to their bladders, and that by returning the bladders to the sea they can cause the souls to be reincarnated in fresh bodies and so multiply the game which the hunters pursue and kill. Acting on this belief every hunter carefully removes and preserves the bladders of all the sea-beasts that he kills; and at a solemn festival held once a year in winter these bladders, containing the souls of all the sea-beasts that have been killed throughout the year, are honoured with dances

and offerings of food in the public assembly-room, after which they are taken out on the ice and thrust through holes into the water; for the simple Esquimaux imagine that the souls of the animals, in high good humour at the kind treatment they have experienced, will thereafter be born again as seals, walrus, and whales, and in that form will flock willingly to be again speared, harpooned, or otherwise done to death by the hunters.

For like reasons, a tribe which depends for its subsistence, chiefly or in part, upon fishing is careful to treat the fish with every mark of honour and respect. The Indians of Peru "adored the fish that they caught in greatest abundance; for they said that the first fish that was made in the world above (for so they named Heaven) gave birth to all other fish of that species, and took care to send them plenty of its children to sustain their tribe. For this reason they worshipped sardines in one region, where they killed more of them than of any other fish; in others, the skate; in others, the dogfish; in others, the golden fish for its beauty; in others, the crawfish; in others, for want of larger gods, the crabs, where they had no other fish, or where they knew not how to catch and kill them. In short, they had whatever fish was most serviceable to them as their gods." The Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia think that when a salmon is killed its soul returns to the salmon country. Hence they take care to throw the bones and offal into the sea, in order that the soul may reanimate them at the resurrection of the salmon. Whereas if they burned the bones the soul would be lost, and so it would be quite impossible for that salmon to rise from the dead. In like manner the Ottawa Indians of Canada, believing that the souls of dead fish passed into other bodies of fish, never burned fish bones, for fear of displeasing the souls of the fish, who would come no more to the nets. The Hurons also refrained from throwing fish bones into the fire, lest the souls of the fish should go and warn the other fish not to let themselves be caught, since the Hurons would burn their bones. Moreover, they had men who preached to the fish and persuaded them to come and be caught. A good preacher was much sought after, for they thought that the exhortations of a clever man had a great effect in drawing the fish to the nets. In the Huron fishing village where the French missionary Sagard stayed, the preacher to the fish prided himself very much on his eloquence, which was of a florid order. Every evening after supper, having seen that all the people were in their places and that a strict silence was observed, he preached to the fish. His text was that the Hurons did not burn fish bones. "Then enlarging on this theme with extraordinary unction, he exhorted and conjured and invited and implored the fish to come and be caught and to be of good courage and to fear nothing, for it was all to serve their friends who honoured them and did not burn their bones." The natives of the Duke of York Island annually decorate a canoe with flowers and ferns, lade it, or are supposed to lade it, with shell-money, and set it adrift to compensate the fish for their fellows who have

been caught and eaten. It is especially necessary to treat the first fish caught with consideration in order to conciliate the rest of the fish, whose conduct may be supposed to be influenced by the reception given to those of their kind which were the first to be taken. Accordingly the Maoris always put back into the sea the first fish caught, "with a prayer that it may tempt other fish to come and be caught."

Still more stringent are the precautions taken when the fish are the first of the season. On salmon rivers, when the fish begin to run up the stream in spring, they are received with much deference by tribes who, like the Indians of the Pacific Coast of North America, subsist largely upon a fish diet. In British Columbia the Indians used to go out to meet the first fish as they came up the river: "They paid court to them, and would address them thus: 'You fish, you fish; you are all chiefs, you are; you are all chiefs.'" Amongst the Tlingit of Alaska the first halibut of the season is carefully handled and addressed as a chief, and a festival is given in his honour, after which the fishing goes on. In spring, when the winds blow soft from the south and the salmon begin to run up the Klamath river, the Karoks of California dance for salmon, to ensure a good catch. One of the Indians, called the Kareya or God-man, retires to the mountains and fasts for ten days. On his return the people flee, while he goes to the river, takes the first salmon of the catch, eats some of it, and with the rest kindles the sacred fire in the sweating house. "No Indian may take a salmon before this dance is held, nor for ten days after it, even if his family are starving." The Karoks also believe that a fisherman will take no salmon if the poles of which his spearing-booth is made were gathered on the river-side, where the salmon might have seen them. The poles must be brought from the top of the highest mountain. The fisherman will also labour in vain if he uses the same poles a second year in booths or weirs, "because the old salmon will have told the young ones about them. There is a favourite fish of the Aino which appears in their rivers about May and June. They prepare for the fishing by observing rules of ceremonial purity, and when they have gone out to fish, the women at home must keep strict silence or the fish would hear them and disappear. When the first fish is caught he is brought home and passed through a small opening at the end of the hut, but not through the door; for if he were passed through the door, "the other fish would certainly see him and disappear." This may partly explain the custom observed by other savages of bringing game in certain cases into their huts, not by the door, but by the window, the smoke-hole, or by a special opening at the back of the hut.

With some savages a special reason for respecting the bones of game, and generally of the animals which they eat, is a belief that, if the bones are preserved, they will in course of time be reclothed with flesh, and thus the animal will come to life again. It is, therefore, clearly for the interest of the hunter to leave the bones intact.

since to destroy them would be to diminish the future supply of game. Many of the Minnetaree Indians "believe that the bones of those bisons which they have slain and divested of flesh rise again clothed with renewed flesh, and quickened with life, and become fat, and fit for slaughter the succeeding June." Hence on the western prairies of America, the skulls of buffaloes may be seen arranged in circles and symmetrical piles, awaiting the resurrection. After feasting on a dog, the Dacotas carefully collect the bones, scrape, wash, and bury them, "partly, as it is said, to testify to the dog-species, that in feasting upon one of their number no disrespect was meant to the species itself, and partly also from a belief that the bones of the animal will rise and reproduce another." In sacrificing an animal the Lapps regularly put aside the bones, eyes, ears, heart, lungs, sexual parts (if the animal was a male), and a morsel of flesh from each limb. Then, after eating the remainder of the flesh, they laid the bones and the rest in anatomical order in a coffin and buried them with the usual rites, believing that the god to whom the animal was sacrificed would reclothe the bones with flesh and restore the animal to life in Jabme-Aimo, the subterranean world of the dead. Sometimes, as after feasting on a bear, they seem to have contented themselves with thus burying the bones. Thus the Lapps expected the resurrection of the slain animal to take place in another world, resembling in this respect the Kamtchatkans, who believed that every creature, down to the smallest fly, would rise from the dead and live underground. On the other hand, the North American Indians looked for the resurrection of the animals in the present world. The habit, observed especially by Mongolian peoples, of stuffing the skin of a sacrificed animal, or stretching it on a framework, points rather to a belief in a resurrection of the latter sort. The objection commonly entertained by primitive peoples to break the bones of the animals which they have eaten or sacrificed may be based either on a belief in the resurrection of the animals, or on a fear of intimidating other creatures of the same species and offending the ghosts of the slain animals. The reluctance of North American Indians and Esquimaux to let dogs gnaw the bones of animals is perhaps only a precaution to prevent the bones from being broken.

But after all the resurrection of dead game may have its inconveniences, and accordingly some hunters take steps to prevent it by hamstringing the animal so as to prevent it or its ghost from getting up and running away. This is the motive alleged for the practice by Koui hunters in Laos; they think that the spells which they utter in the chase may lose their magical virtue, and that the slaughtered animal may consequently come to life again and escape. To prevent that catastrophe they therefore hamstring the beast as soon as they have butchered it. When an Esquimau of Alaska has killed a fox, he carefully cuts the tendons of all the animal's legs in order to prevent the ghost from reanimating the body and walking about. But hamstringing the carcase is not the only measure which the prudent savage

adopts for the sake of disabling the ghost of his victim. In old days, when the Aino went out hunting and killed a fox first, they took care to tie its mouth up tightly in order to prevent the ghost of the animal from sallying forth and warning its fellows against the approach of the hunter. The Gilyaks of the Amoor River put out the eyes of the seals they have killed, lest the ghosts of the slain animals should know their slayers and avenge their death by spoiling the seal-hunt.

Besides the animals which primitive man dreads for their strength and ferocity, and those which he reveres on account of the benefits which he expects from them, there is another class of creatures which he sometimes deems it necessary to conciliate by worship and sacrifice. These are the vermin that infest his crops and his cattle. To rid himself of these deadly foes the farmer has recourse to many superstitious devices, of which, though some are meant to destroy or intimidate the vermin, others aim at propitiating them and persuading them by fair means to spare the fruits of the earth and the herds. Thus Esthonian peasants, in the island of Oesel, stand in great awe of the weevil, an insect which is exceedingly destructive to the grain. They give it a fine name, and if a child is about to kill a weevil they say, "Don't do it; the more we hurt him, the more he hurts us." If they find a weevil they bury it in the earth instead of killing it. Some even put the weevil under a stone in the field and offer corn to it. They think that thus it is appeased and does less harm. Amongst the Saxons of Transylvania, in order to keep sparrows from the corn, the sower begins by throwing the first handful of seed backwards over his head, saying, "That is for you, sparrows." To guard the corn against the attacks of leaf-flies he shuts his eyes and scatters three handfuls of oats in different directions. Having made this offering to the leaf-flies he feels sure that they will spare the corn. A Transylvanian way of securing the crops against all birds, beasts, and insects, is this: after he has finished sowing, the sower goes once more from end to end of the field imitating the gesture of sowing, but with an empty hand. As he does so he says, "I sow this for the animals; I sow it for every thing that flies and creeps, that walks and stands, that sings and springs, in the name of God the Father, etc." The following is a German way of freeing a garden from caterpillars. After sunset or at midnight the mistress of the house, or another female member of the family, walks all round the garden dragging a broom after her. She may not look behind her, and must keep murmuring, "Good evening, Mother Caterpillar, you shall come with your husband to church." The garden gate is left open till the following morning.

Sometimes in dealing with vermin the farmer aims at hitting a happy mean between excessive rigour on the one hand and weak indulgence on the other; kind but firm, he tempers severity with mercy. An ancient Greek treatise on farming advises the husbandman who would rid his lands of mice to act thus: "Take a sheet of paper and write on it as follows: 'I adjure you, ye mice here present, that ye neither injure me nor suffer another mouse to do so. I give

you yonder field' (here you specify the field); 'but if ever I catch you here again, by the Mother of the Gods I will rend you in seven pieces.' Write this, and stick the paper on an unhewn stone in the field before sunrise, taking care to keep the written side up." In the Ardennes they say that to get rid of rats you should repeat the following words: *"Erat verbum, apud Deum vestrum.* Male rats and female rats, I conjure you, by the great God, to go out of my house, out of all my habitations, and to betake yourselves to such and such a place, there to end your days. *Decretis, reversis et desembarassis virgo potens, clemens, justitiae."* Then write the same words on pieces of paper, fold them up, and place one of them under the door by which the rats are to go forth, and the other on the road which they are to take. This exorcism should be performed at sunrise. Some years ago an American farmer was reported to have written a civil letter to the rats, telling them that his crops were short, that he could not afford to keep them through the winter, that he had been very kind to them, and that for their own good he thought they had better leave him and go to some of his neighbours who had more grain. This document he pinned to a post in his barn for the rats to read.

Sometimes the desired object is supposed to be attained by treating with high distinction one or two chosen individuals of the obnoxious species, while the rest are pursued with relentless rigour. In the East Indian island of Bali, the mice which ravage the rice-fields are caught in great numbers, and burned in the same way that corpses are burned. But two of the captured mice are allowed to live, and receive a little packet of white linen. Then the people bow down before them, as before gods, and let them go. When the farms of the Sea Dyaks or Ibans of Sarawak are much pestered by birds and insects, they catch a specimen of each kind of vermin (one sparrow, one grasshopper, and so on), put them in a tiny boat of bark well-stocked with provisions, and then allow the little vessel with its obnoxious passengers to float down the river. If that does not drive the pests away, the Dyaks resort to what they deem a more effectual mode of accomplishing the same purpose. They make a clay crocodile as large as life and set it up in the fields, where they offer it food, rice-spirit, and cloth, and sacrifice a fowl and a pig before it. Mollified by these attentions, the ferocious animal very soon gobbles up all the creatures that devour the crops. In Albania, if the fields or vineyards are ravaged by locusts or beetles, some of the women will assemble with dishevelled hair, catch a few of the insects, and march with them in a funeral procession to a spring or stream, in which they drown the creatures. Then one of the women sings, "O locusts and beetles who have left us bereaved," and the dirge is taken up and repeated by all the women in chorus. Thus by celebrating the obsequies of a few locusts and beetles, they hope to bring about the death of them all. When caterpillars invaded a vineyard or field in Syria, the virgins were gathered, and one of the caterpillars was taken and a girl made its mother. Then they bewailed and buried it. Thereafter they conducted the "mother" to the place

where the caterpillars were, consoling her, in order that all the caterpillars might leave the garden.

CHAPTER LIV

TYPES OF ANIMAL SACRAMENT

§ 1. *The Egyptian and the Aino Types of Sacrament.*—We are now perhaps in a position to understand the ambiguous behaviour of the Aino and Gilyaks towards the bear. It has been shown that the sharp line of demarcation which we draw between mankind and the lower animals does not exist for the savage. To him many of the other animals appear as his equals or even his superiors, not merely in brute force but in intelligence; and if choice or necessity leads him to take their lives, he feels bound, out of regard to his own safety, to do it in a way which will be as inoffensive as possible not merely to the living animal, but to its departed spirit and to all the other animals of the same species, which would resent an affront put upon one of their kind much as a tribe of savages would revenge an injury or insult offered to a tribesman. We have seen that among the many devices by which the savage seeks to atone for the wrong done by him to his animal victims one is to show marked deference to a few chosen individuals of the species, for such behaviour is apparently regarded as entitling him to exterminate with impunity all the rest of the species upon which he can lay hands. This principle perhaps explains the attitude, at first sight puzzling and contradictory, of the Aino towards the bear. The flesh and skin of the bear regularly afford them food and clothing; but since the bear is an intelligent and powerful animal, it is necessary to offer some satisfaction or atonement to the bear species for the loss which it sustains in the death of so many of its members. This satisfaction or atonement is made by rearing young bears, treating them, so long as they live, with respect, and killing them with extraordinary marks of sorrow and devotion. So the other bears are appeased, and do not resent the slaughter of their kind by attacking the slayers or deserting the country, which would deprive the Aino of one of their means of subsistence.

Thus the primitive worship of animals conforms to two types, which are in some respects the converse of each other. On the one hand, animals are worshipped, and are therefore neither killed nor eaten. On the other hand, animals are worshipped because they are habitually killed and eaten. In both types of worship the animal is revered on account of some benefit, positive or negative, which the savage hopes to receive from it. In the former worship the benefit comes either in the positive shape of protection, advice, and help which the animal affords the man, or in the negative shape of abstinence from injuries which it is in the power of the animal to inflict. In the latter worship the benefit takes the material form of the animal's flesh and skin. The two types of worship are in some measure antithetical: in the

one, the animal is not eaten because it is revered; in the other, it is revered because it is eaten. But both may be practised by the same people, as we see in the case of the North American Indians, who, while they apparently revere and spare their totem animals, also revere the animals and fish upon which they subsist. The aborigines of Australia have totemism in the most primitive form known to us; but there is no clear evidence that they attempt, like the North American Indians, to conciliate the animals which they kill and eat. The means which the Australians adopt to secure a plentiful supply of game appear to be primarily based, not on conciliation, but on sympathetic magic, a principle to which the North American Indians also resort for the same purpose. Hence, as the Australians undoubtedly represent a ruder and earlier stage of human progress than the American Indians, it would seem that before hunters think of worshipping the game as a means of ensuring an abundant supply of it, they seek to attain the same end by sympathetic magic. This, again, would show—what there is good reason for believing—that sympathetic magic is one of the earliest means by which man endeavours to adapt the agencies of nature to his needs.

Corresponding to the two distinct types of animal worship, there are two distinct types of the custom of killing the animal god. On the one hand, when the revered animal is habitually spared, it is nevertheless killed—and sometimes eaten—on rare and solemn occasions. Examples of this custom have been already given and an explanation of them offered. On the other hand, when the revered animal is habitually killed, the slaughter of any one of the species involves the killing of the god, and is atoned for on the spot by apologies and sacrifices, especially when the animal is a powerful and dangerous one; and, in addition to this ordinary and everyday atonement, there is a special annual atonement, at which a select individual of the species is slain with extraordinary marks of respect and devotion. Clearly the two types of sacramental killing—the Egyptian and the Aino types, as we may call them for distinction—are liable to be confounded by an observer; and, before we can say to which type any particular example belongs, it is necessary to ascertain whether the animal sacramentally slain belongs to a species which is habitually spared, or to one which is habitually killed by the tribe. In the former case the example belongs to the Egyptian type of sacrament, in the latter to the Aino type.

The practice of pastoral tribes appears to furnish examples of both types of sacrament. "Pastoral tribes," says Adolf Bastian, "being sometimes obliged to sell their herds to strangers who may handle the bones disrespectfully, seek to avert the danger which such a sacrilege would entail by consecrating one of the herd as an object of worship, eating it sacramentally in the family circle with closed doors, and afterwards treating the bones with all the ceremonious respect which, strictly speaking, should be accorded to every head of cattle, but which, being punctually paid to the representative animal,

is deemed to be paid to all. Such family meals are found among various peoples, especially those of the Caucasus. When amongst the Abchases the shepherds in spring eat their common meal with their loins girt and their staves in their hands, this may be looked upon both as a sacrament and as an oath of mutual help and support. For the strongest of all oaths is that which is accompanied with the eating of a sacred substance, since the perjured person cannot possibly escape the avenging god whom he has taken into his body and assimilated." This kind of sacrament is of the Aino or expiatory type, since it is meant to atone to the species for the possible ill-usage of individuals. An expiation, similar in principle but different in details, is offered by the Kalmucks to the sheep, whose flesh is one of their staple foods. Rich Kalmucks are in the habit of consecrating a white ram under the title of "the ram of heaven" or "the ram of the spirit." The animal is never shorn and never sold; but when it grows old and its owner wishes to consecrate a new one, the old ram must be killed and eaten at a feast to which the neighbours are invited. On a lucky day, generally in autumn when the sheep are fat, a sorcerer kills the old ram, after sprinkling it with milk. Its flesh is eaten; the skeleton, with a portion of the fat, is burned on a turf altar; and the skin, with the head and feet, is hung up.

An example of a sacrament of the Egyptian type is furnished by the Todas, a pastoral people of Southern India, who subsist largely upon the milk of their buffaloes. Amongst them "the buffalo is to a certain degree held sacred" and "is treated with great kindness, even with a degree of adoration, by the people." They never eat the flesh of the cow buffalo, and as a rule abstain from the flesh of the male. But to the latter rule there is a single exception. Once a year all the adult males of the village join in the ceremony of killing and eating a very young male calf—seemingly under a month old. They take the animal into the dark recesses of the village wood, where it is killed with a club made from the sacred tree of the Todas (the *Millingtonia*). A sacred fire having been made by the rubbing of sticks, the flesh of the calf is roasted on the embers of certain trees, and is eaten by the men alone, women being excluded from the assembly. This is the only occasion on which the Todas eat buffalo flesh. The Madi or Moru tribe of Central Africa, whose chief wealth is their cattle, though they also practise agriculture, appear to kill a lamb sacramentally on certain solemn occasions. The custom is thus described by Dr. Felkin: "A remarkable custom is observed at stated times—once a year, I am led to believe. I have not been able to ascertain what exact meaning is attached to it. It appears, however, to relieve the people's minds, for beforehand they evince much sadness, and seem very joyful when the ceremony is duly accomplished. The following is what takes place: A large concourse of people of all ages assemble, and sit down round a circle of stones, which is erected by the side of a road (really a narrow path). A very choice lamb is then fetched by a boy, who leads it four times round the assembled people. As it passes they

pluck off little bits of its fleece and place them in their hair, or on to some other part of their body. The lamb is then led up to the stones, and there killed by a man belonging to a kind of priestly order, who takes some of the blood and sprinkles it four times over the people. He then applies it individually. On the children he makes a small ring of blood over the lower end of the breast bone, on women and girls he makes a mark above the breasts, and the men he touches on each shoulder. He then proceeds to explain the ceremony, and to exhort the people to show kindness. . . . When this discourse, which is at times of great length, is over, the people rise, each places a leaf on or by the circle of stones, and then they depart with signs of great joy. The lamb's skull is hung on a tree near the stones, and its flesh is eaten by the poor. This ceremony is observed on a small scale at other times. If a family is in any great trouble, through illness or bereavement, their friends and neighbours come together and a lamb is killed; this is thought to avert further evil. The same custom prevails at the grave of departed friends, and also on joyful occasions, such as the return of a son home after a very prolonged absence." The sorrow thus manifested by the people at the annual slaughter of the lamb seems to show that the lamb slain is a sacred or divine animal, whose death is mourned by his worshippers, just as the death of the sacred buzzard was mourned by the Californians and the death of the Theban ram by the Egyptians. The smearing each of the worshippers with the blood of the lamb is a form of communion with the divinity; the vehicle of the divine life is applied externally instead of being taken internally, as when the blood is drunk or the flesh eaten.

§ 2. *Processions with Sacred Animals.*—The form of communion in which the sacred animal is taken from house to house, that all may enjoy a share of its divine influence, has been exemplified by the Gilyak custom of promenading the bear through the village before it is slain. A similar form of communion with the sacred snake is observed by a Snake tribe in the Punjaub. Once a year in the month of September the snake is worshipped by all castes and religions for nine days only. At the end of August the Mirasans, especially those of the Snake tribe, make a snake of dough which they paint black and red, and place on a winnowing basket. This basket they carry round the village, and on entering any house they say: "God be with you all! May every ill be far! May our patron's (Gugga's) word thrive!" Then they present the basket with the snake, saying: "A small cake of flour: a little bit of butter: if you obey the snake, you and yours shall thrive!" Strictly speaking, a cake and butter should be given, but it is seldom done. Every one, however, gives something, generally a handful of dough or some corn. In houses where there is a new bride or whence a bride has gone, or where a son has been born, it is usual to give a rupee and a quarter, or some cloth. Sometimes the bearers of the snake also sing:

"Give the snake a piece of cloth, and he will send a lively bride!"

When every house has been thus visited, the dough snake is buried and a small grave is erected over it. Thither during the nine days of September the women come to worship. They bring a basin of curds, a small portion of which they offer at the snake's grave, kneeling on the ground and touching the earth with their foreheads. Then they go home and divide the rest of the curds among the children. Here the dough snake is clearly a substitute for a real snake. Indeed, in districts where snakes abound the worship is offered, not at the grave of the dough snake, but in the jungles where snakes are known to be. Besides this yearly worship, performed by all the people, the members of the Snake tribe worship in the same way every morning after a new moon. The Snake tribe is not uncommon in the Punjaub. Members of it will not kill a snake, and they say that its bite does not hurt them. If they find a dead snake, they put clothes on it and give it a regular funeral.

Ceremonies closely analogous to this Indian worship of the snake have survived in Europe into recent times, and doubtless date from a very primitive paganism. The best-known example is the "hunting of the wren." By many European peoples—the ancient Greeks and Romans, the modern Italians, Spaniards, French, Germans, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, English, and Welsh—the wren has been designated the king, the little king, the king of birds, the hedge king, and so forth, and has been reckoned amongst those birds which it is extremely unlucky to kill. In England it is supposed that if any one kills a wren or harries its nest, he will infallibly break a bone or meet with some dreadful misfortune within the year; sometimes it is thought that the cows will give bloody milk. In Scotland the wren is called "the Lady of Heaven's hen," and boys say:

"Malisons, malisons, mair than ten,
That harry the Ladye of Heaven's hen!"

At Saint Donan, in Brittany, people believe that if children touch the young wrens in the nest, they will suffer from the fire of St. Lawrence, that is, from pimples on the face, legs, and so on. In other parts of France it is thought that if a person kills a wren or harries its nest, his house will be struck by lightning, or that the fingers with which he did the deed will shrivel up and drop off, or at least be maimed, or that his cattle will suffer in their feet.

Notwithstanding such beliefs, the custom of annually killing the wren has prevailed widely both in this country and in France. In the Isle of Man down to the eighteenth century the custom was observed on Christmas Eve, or rather Christmas morning. On the twenty-fourth of December, towards evening, all the servants got a holiday; they did not go to bed all night, but rambled about till the bells rang in all the churches at midnight. When prayers were over, they went to hunt the wren, and having found one of these birds they killed it and fastened it to the top of a long pole with its wings extended. Thus

they carried it in procession to every house chanting the following rhyme:

"We hunted the wren for Robin the Bobbin,
We hunted the wren for Jack of the Can,
We hunted the wren for Robin the Bobbin,
We hunted the wren for every one."

When they had gone from house to house and collected all the money they could, they laid the wren on a bier and carried it in procession to the parish churchyard, where they made a grave and buried it "with the utmost solemnity, singing dirges over her in the Manks language, which they call her knell; after which Christmas begins." The burial over, the company outside the churchyard formed a circle and danced to music.

A writer of the eighteenth century says that in Ireland the wren "is still hunted and killed by the peasants on Christmas Day, and on the following (St. Stephen's Day) he is carried about, hung by the leg, in the centre of two hoops, crossing each other at right angles, and a procession made in every village, of men, women, and children, singing an Irish catch, importing him to be the king of all birds." Down to the present time the "hunting of the wren" still takes place in parts of Leinster and Connaught. On Christmas Day or St. Stephen's Day the boys hunt and kill the wren, fasten it in the middle of a mass of holly and ivy on the top of a broomstick, and on St. Stephen's Day go about with it from house to house, singing:

"The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze;
Although he is little, his family's great,
I pray you, good landlady, give us a treat."

Money or food (bread, butter, eggs, etc.) were given them, upon which they feasted in the evening.

In the first half of the nineteenth century similar customs were still observed in various parts of the south of France. Thus at Carcassone, every year on the first Sunday of December the young people of the street Saint Jean used to go out of the town armed with sticks, with which they beat the bushes, looking for wrens. The first to strike down one of these birds was proclaimed King. Then they returned to the town in procession, headed by the King, who carried the wren on a pole. On the evening of the last day of the year the King and all who had hunted the wren marched through the streets of the town to the light of torches, with drums beating and fifes playing in front of them. At the door of every house they stopped, and one of them wrote with chalk on the door *vive le roi!* with the number of the year which was about to begin. On the morning of Twelfth Day the King again marched in procession with great pomp, wearing a crown and a blue mantle and carrying a sceptre. In front of him was borne the wren fastened to the top of a pole, which was adorned with a verdant wreath of olive, of oak, and sometimes of mistletoe grown on an oak.

After hearing high mass in the parish church of St. Vincent, surrounded by his officers and guards, the King visited the bishop, the mayor, the magistrates, and the chief inhabitants, collecting money to defray the expenses of the royal banquet which took place in the evening and wound up with a dance.

The parallelism between this custom of "hunting the wren" and some of those which we have considered, especially the Gilyak procession with the bear, and the Indian one with the snake, seems too close to allow us to doubt that they all belong to the same circle of ideas. The worshipful animal is killed with special solemnity once a year; and before or immediately after death he is promenaded from door to door, that each of his worshippers may receive a portion of the divine virtues that are supposed to emanate from the dead or dying god. Religious processions of this sort must have had a great place in the ritual of European peoples in prehistoric times, if we may judge from the numerous traces of them which have survived in folk-custom. For example, on the last day of the year, or Hogmanay as it was called, it used to be customary in the Highlands of Scotland for a man to dress himself up in a cow's hide and thus attired to go from house to house, attended by young fellows, each of them armed with a staff, to which a bit of raw hide was tied. Round every house the hide-clad man used to run thrice *deiseal,* that is, according to the course of the sun, so as to keep the house on his right hand; while the others pursued him, beating the hide with their staves and thereby making a loud noise like the beating of a drum. In this disorderly procession they also struck the walls of the house. On being admitted, one of the party, standing within the threshold, pronounced a blessing on the family in these words: "May God bless the house and all that belongs to it, cattle, stones, and timber! In plenty of meat, of bed and body clothes, and health of men may it ever abound!" Then each of the party singed in the fire a little bit of the hide which was tied to his staff; and having done so he applied the singed hide to the nose of every person and of every domestic animal belonging to the house. This was imagined to secure them from diseases and other misfortunes, particularly from witchcraft, throughout the ensuing year. The whole ceremony was called *calluinn* because of the great noise made in beating the hide. It was observed in the Hebrides, including St. Kilda, down to the second half of the eighteenth century at least, and it seems to have survived well into the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER LV

THE TRANSFERENCE OF EVIL

§ 1. *The Transference to Inanimate Objects.*—We have now traced the practice of killing a god among peoples in the hunting, pastoral, and agricultural stages of society; and I have attempted to explain

the motives which led men to adopt so curious a custom. One aspect of the custom still remains to be noticed. The accumulated misfortunes and sins of the whole people are sometimes laid upon the dying god, who is supposed to bear them away for ever, leaving the people innocent and happy. The notion that we can transfer our guilt and sufferings to some other being who will bear them for us is familiar to the savage mind. It arises from a very obvious confusion between the physical and the mental, between the material and the immaterial. Because it is possible to shift a load of wood, stones, or what not, from our own back to the back of another, the savage fancies that it is equally possible to shift the burden of his pains and sorrows to another, who will suffer them in his stead. Upon this idea he acts, and the result is an endless number of very unamiable devices for palming off upon some one else the trouble which a man shrinks from bearing himself. In short, the principle of vicarious suffering is commonly understood and practised by races who stand on a low level of social and intellectual culture. In the following pages I shall illustrate the theory and the practice as they are found among savages in all their naked simplicity, undisguised by the refinements of metaphysics and the subtleties of theology.

The devices to which the cunning and selfish savage resorts for the sake of easing himself at the expense of his neighbour are manifold; only a few typical examples out of a multitude can be cited. At the outset it is to be observed that the evil of which a man seeks to rid himself need not be transferred to a person; it may equally well be transferred to an animal or a thing, though in the last case the thing is often only a vehicle to convey the trouble to the first person who touches it. In some of the East Indian islands they think that epilepsy can be cured by striking the patient on the face with the leaves of certain trees and then throwing them away. The disease is believed to have passed into the leaves, and to have been thrown away with them. To cure toothache some of the Australian blacks apply a heated spear-thrower to the cheek. The spear-thrower is then cast away, and the toothache goes with it in the shape of a black stone called *karriitch*. Stones of this kind are found in old mounds and sandhills. They are carefully collected and thrown in the direction of enemies in order to give them toothache. The Bahima, a pastoral people of Uganda, often suffer from deep-seated abscesses: "their cure for this is to transfer the disease to some other person by obtaining herbs from the medicine-man, rubbing them over the place where the swelling is, and burying them in the road where people continually pass; the first person who steps over these buried herbs contracts the disease, and the original patient recovers."

Sometimes in case of sickness the malady is transferred to an effigy as a preliminary to passing it on to a human being. Thus among the Baganda the medicine-man would sometimes make a model of his patient in clay; then a relative of the sick man would rub the image over the sufferer's body and either bury it in the road or hide it in

the grass by the wayside. The first person who stepped over the image or passed by it would catch the disease. Sometimes the effigy was made out of a plantain-flower tied up so as to look like a person; it was used in the same way as the clay figure. But the use of images for this maleficent purpose was a capital crime; any person caught in the act of burying one of them in the public road would surely have been put to death.

In the western district of the island of Timor, when men or women are making long and tiring journeys, they fan themselves with leafy branches, which they afterwards throw away on particular spots where their forefathers did the same before them. The fatigue which they felt is thus supposed to have passed into the leaves and to be left behind. Others use stones instead of leaves. Similarly in the Babar Archipelago tired people will strike themselves with stones, believing that they thus transfer to the stones the weariness which they felt in their own bodies. They then throw away the stones in places which are specially set apart for the purpose. A like belief and practice in many distant parts of the world have given rise to those cairns or heaps of sticks and leaves which travellers often observe beside the path, and to which every passing native adds his contribution in the shape of a stone, or stick, or leaf. Thus in the Solomon and Banks' Islands the natives are wont to throw sticks, stones, or leaves upon a heap at a place of steep descent, or where a difficult path begins, saying, "There goes my fatigue." The act is not a religious rite, for the thing thrown on the heap is not an offering to spiritual powers, and the words which accompany the act are not a prayer. It is nothing but a magical ceremony for getting rid of fatigue, which the simple savage fancies he can embody in a stick, leaf, or stone, and so cast it from him.

§ 2. *The Transference to Animals.*—Animals are often employed as a vehicle for carrying away or transferring the evil. When a Moor has a headache he will sometimes take a lamb or a goat and beat it till it falls down, believing that the headache will thus be transferred to the animal. In Morocco most wealthy Moors keep a wild boar in their stables, in order that the jinn and evil spirits may be diverted from the horses and enter into the boar. Amongst the Caffres of South Africa, when other remedies have failed, "natives sometimes adopt the custom of taking a goat into the presence of a sick man, and confess the sins of the kraal over the animal. Sometimes a few drops of blood from the sick man are allowed to fall on the head of the goat, which is turned out into an uninhabited part of the veldt. The sickness is supposed to be transferred to the animal, and to become lost in the desert." In Arabia, when the plague is raging, the people will sometimes lead a camel through all the quarters of the town in order that the animal may take the pestilence on itself. Then they strangle it in a sacred place and imagine that they have rid themselves of the camel and of the plague at one blow. It is said that when smallpox is raging the savages of Formosa will drive the demon of disease into

a sow, then cut off the animal's ears and burn them or it, believing that in this way they rid themselves of the plague.

Amongst the Malagasy the vehicle for carrying away evils is called a *faditra*. "The faditra is anything selected by the sikidy [divining board] for the purpose of taking away any hurtful evils or diseases that might prove injurious to an individual's happiness, peace, or prosperity. The faditra may be either ashes, cut money, a sheep, a pumpkin, or anything else the sikidy may choose to direct. After the particular article is appointed, the priest counts upon it all the evils that may prove injurious to the person for whom it is made, and which he then charges the faditra to take away for ever. If the faditra be ashes, it is blown, to be carried away by the wind. If it be cut money, it is thrown to the bottom of deep water, or where it can never be found. If it be a sheep, it is carried away to a distance on the shoulders of a man, who runs with all his might, mumbling as he goes, as if in the greatest rage against the faditra, for the evils it is bearing away. If it be a pumpkin, it is carried on the shoulders to a little distance, and there dashed upon the ground with every appearance of fury and indignation." A Malagasy was informed by a diviner that he was doomed to a bloody death, but that possibly he might avert his fate by performing a certain rite. Carrying a small vessel full of blood upon his head, he was to mount upon the back of a bullock; while thus mounted, he was to spill the blood upon the bullock's head, and then send the animal away into the wilderness, whence it might never return.

The Bataks of Sumatra have a ceremony which they call "making the curse to fly away." When a woman is childless, a sacrifice is offered to the gods of three grasshoppers, representing a head of cattle, a buffalo, and a horse. Then a swallow is set free, with a prayer that the curse may fall upon the bird and fly away with it. "The entrance into a house of an animal which does not generally seek to share the abode of man is regarded by the Malays as ominous of misfortune. If a wild bird flies into a house, it must be carefully caught and smeared with oil, and must then be released in the open air, a formula being recited in which it is bidden to fly away with all the ill-luck and misfortunes of the occupier." In antiquity Greek women seem to have done the same with swallows which they caught in the house: they poured oil on them and let them fly away, apparently for the purpose of removing ill-luck from the household. The Huzuls of the Carpathians imagine that they can transfer freckles to the first swallow they see in spring by washing their face in flowing water and saying, "Swallow, swallow, take my freckles, and give me rosy cheeks."

Among the Badagas of the Neilgherry Hills in Southern India, when a death has taken place, the sins of the deceased are laid upon a buffalo calf. For this purpose the people gather round the corpse and carry it outside of the village. There an elder of the tribe, standing at the head of the corpse, recites or chants a long list of sins such as any Badaga may commit, and the people repeat the last word of each

line after him. The confession of sins is thrice repeated. "By a conventional mode of expression, the sum total of sins a man may do is said to be thirteen hundred. Admitting that the deceased has committed them all, the performer cries aloud, 'Stay not their flight to God's pure feet.' As he closes, the whole assembly chants aloud 'Stay not their flight.' Again the performer enters into details, and cries, 'He killed the crawling snake. It is a sin.' In a moment the last word is caught up, and all the people cry 'It is a sin.' As they shout, the performer lays his hand upon the calf. The sin is transferred to the calf. Thus the whole catalogue is gone through in this impressive way. But this is not enough. As the last shout 'Let all be well' dies away, the performer gives place to another, and again confession is made, and all the people shout 'It is a sin.' A third time it is done. Then, still in solemn silence, the calf is let loose. Like the Jewish scapegoat, it may never be used for secular work." At a Badaga funeral witnessed by the Rev. A. C. Clayton the buffalo calf was led thrice round the bier, and the dead man's hand was laid on its head. "By this act, the calf was supposed to receive all the sins of the deceased. It was then driven away to a great distance, that it might contaminate no one, and it was said that it would never be sold, but looked on as a dedicated sacred animal." The idea of this ceremony is, that the sins of the deceased enter the calf, or that the task of his absolution is laid on it. They say that the calf very soon disappears, and that it is never heard of."

§ 3. *The Transference to Men.*—Again, men sometimes play the part of scapegoat by diverting to themselves the evils that threaten others. When a Cingalese is dangerously ill, and the physicians can do nothing, a devil-dancer is called in, who by making offerings to the devils, and dancing in the masks appropriate to them, conjures these demons of disease, one after the other, out of the sick man's body and into his own. Having thus successfully extracted the cause of the malady, the artful dancer lies down on a bier, and shamming death is carried to an open place outside the village. Here, being left to himself, he soon comes to life again, and hastens back to claim his reward. In 1590 a Scotch witch of the name of Agnes Sampson was convicted of curing a certain Robert Kers of a disease "laid upon him by a westland warlock when he was at Dumfries, whilk sickness she took upon herself, and kept the same with great groaning and torment till the morn, at whilk time there was a great din heard in the house." The noise was made by the witch in her efforts to shift the disease, by means of clothes, from herself to a cat or dog. Unfortunately the attempt partly miscarried. The disease missed the animal and hit Alexander Douglas of Dalkeith, who dwined and died of it, while the original patient, Robert Kers, was made whole.

"In one part of New Zealand an expiation for sin was felt to be necessary; a service was performed over an individual, by which all the sins of the tribe were supposed to be transferred to him, a fern stalk was previously tied to his person, with which he jumped into

the river, and there unbinding, allowed it to float away to the sea, bearing their sins with it." In great emergencies the sins of the Rajah of Manipur used to be transferred to somebody else, usually to a criminal, who earned his pardon by his vicarious sufferings. To effect the transference the Rajah and his wife, clad in fine robes, bathed on a scaffold erected in the bazaar, while the criminal crouched beneath it. With the water which dripped from them on him their sins also were washed away and fell on the human scapegoat. To complete the transference the Rajah and his wife made over their fine robes to their substitute, while they themselves, clad in new raiment, mixed with the people till evening. In Travancore, when a Rajah is near his end, they seek out a holy Brahman, who consents to take upon himself the sins of the dying man in consideration of the sum of ten thousand rupees. Thus prepared to immolate himself on the altar of duty, the saint is introduced into the chamber of death, and closely embraces the dying Rajah, saying to him, "O King, I undertake to bear all your sins and diseases. May your Highness live long and reign happily." Having thus taken to himself the sins of the sufferer, he is sent away from the country and never more allowed to return. At Utch Kurgan in Turkestan Mr. Schuyler saw an old man who was said to get his living by taking on himself the sins of the dead, and thenceforth devoting his life to prayer for their souls.

In Uganda, when an army had returned from war, and the gods warned the king by their oracles that some evil had attached itself to the soldiers, it was customary to pick out a woman slave from the captives, together with a cow, a goat, a fowl, and a dog from the booty, and to send them back under a strong guard to the borders of the country from which they had come. There their limbs were broken and they were left to die; for they were too crippled to crawl back to Uganda. In order to ensure the transference of the evil to these substitutes, bunches of grass were rubbed over the people and cattle and then tied to the victims. After that the army was pronounced clean and was allowed to return to the capital. So on his accession a new king of Uganda used to wound a man and send him away as a scapegoat to Bunyoro to carry away any uncleanliness that might attach to the king or queen.

§ 4. *The Transference of Evil in Europe.*—The examples of the transference of evil hitherto adduced have been mostly drawn from the customs of savage or barbarous peoples. But similar attempts to shift the burden of disease, misfortune, and sin from one's self to another person, or to an animal or thing, have been common also among the civilised nations of Europe, both in ancient and modern times. A Roman cure for fever was to pare the patient's nails, and stick the parings with wax on a neighbour's door before sunrise; the fever then passed from the sick man to his neighbour. Similar devices must have been resorted to by the Greeks; for in laying down laws for his ideal state, Plato thinks it too much to expect that

men should not be alarmed at finding certain wax figures adhering to their doors or to the tombstones of their parents, or lying at cross-roads. In the fourth century of our era Marcellus of Bordeaux prescribed a cure for warts, which has still a great vogue among the superstitious in various parts of Europe. You are to touch your warts with as many little stones as you have warts; then wrap the stones in an ivy leaf, and throw them away in a thoroughfare. Whoever picks them up will get the warts, and you will be rid of them. People in the Orkney Islands will sometimes wash a sick man, and then throw the water down at a gateway, in the belief that the sickness will leave the patient and be transferred to the first person who passes through the gate. A Bavarian cure for fever is to write upon a piece of paper, "Fever, stay away, I am not at home," and to put the paper in somebody's pocket. The latter then catches the fever, and the patient is rid of it. A Bohemian prescription for the same malady is this. Take an empty pot, go with it to a cross-road, throw it down, and run away. The first person who kicks against the pot will catch your fever, and you will be cured.

Often in Europe, as among savages, an attempt is made to transfer a pain or malady from a man to an animal. Grave writers of antiquity recommended that, if a man be stung by a scorpion, he should sit upon an ass with his face to the tail, or whisper in the animal's ear, "A scorpion has stung me"; in either case, they thought, the pain would be transferred from the man to the ass. Many cures of this sort are recorded by Marcellus. For example, he tells us that the following is a remedy for toothache. Standing booted under the open sky on the ground, you catch a frog by the head, spit into its mouth, ask it to carry away the ache, and then let it go. But the ceremony must be performed on a lucky day and at a lucky hour. In Cheshire the ailment known as aphtha or thrush, which affects the mouth or throat of infants, is not uncommonly treated in much the same manner. A young frog is held for a few moments with its head inside the mouth of the sufferer, whom it is supposed to relieve by taking the malady to itself. "I assure you," said an old woman who had often superintended such a cure, "we used to hear the poor frog whooping and coughing, mortal bad, for days after; it would have made your heart ache to hear the poor creature coughing as it did about the garden." A Northamptonshire, Devonshire, and Welsh cure for a cough is to put a hair of the patient's head between two slices of buttered bread and give the sandwich to a dog. The animal will thereupon catch the cough and the patient will lose it. Sometimes an ailment is transferred to an animal by sharing food with it. Thus in Oldenburg, if you are sick of a fever you set a bowl of sweet milk before a dog and say, "Good luck, you hound! may you be sick and I be sound!" Then when the dog has lapped some of the milk, you take a swig at the bowl; and then the dog must lap again, and then you must swig again; and when you and the dog have done it the third time, he will have the fever and you will be quit of it.

A Bohemian cure for fever is to go out into the forest before the sun is up and look for a snipe's nest. When you have found it, take out one of the young birds and keep it beside you for three days. Then go back into the wood and set the snipe free. The fever will leave you at once. The snipe has taken it away. So in Vedic times the Hindoos of old sent consumption away with a blue jay. They said, "O consumption, fly away, fly away with the blue jay! With the wild rush of the storm and the whirlwind, oh, vanish away!" In the village of Llandegla in Wales there is a church dedicated to the virgin martyr St. Tecla, where the falling sickness is, or used to be, cured by being transferred to a fowl. The patient first washed his limbs in a sacred well hard by, dropped fourpence into it as an offering, walked thrice round the well, and thrice repeated the Lord's prayer. Then the fowl, which was a cock or a hen according as the patient was a man or a woman, was put into a basket and carried round first the well and afterwards the church. Next the sufferer entered the church and lay down under the communion table till break of day. After that he offered sixpence and departed, leaving the fowl in the church. If the bird died, the sickness was supposed to have been transferred to it from the man or woman, who was now rid of the disorder. As late as 1855 the old parish clerk of the village remembered quite well to have seen the birds staggering about from the effects of the fits which had been transferred to them.

Often the sufferer seeks to shift his burden of sickness or ill-luck to some inanimate object. In Athens there is a little chapel of St. John the Baptist built against an ancient column. Fever patients resort thither, and by attaching a waxed thread to the inner side of the column believe that they transfer the fever from themselves to the pillar. In the Mark of Brandenburg they say that if you suffer from giddiness you should strip yourself naked and run thrice round a flax-field after sunset; in that way the flax will get the giddiness and you will be rid of it.

But perhaps the thing most commonly employed in Europe as a receptacle for sickness and trouble of all sorts is a tree or bush. A Bulgarian cure for fever is to run thrice around a willow-tree at sunrise, crying, "The fever shall shake thee, and the sun shall warm me." In the Greek island of Karpathos the priest ties a red thread round the neck of a sick person. Next morning the friends of the patient remove the thread and go out to the hillside, where they tie the thread to a tree, thinking that they thus transfer the sickness to the tree. Italians attempt to cure fever in like manner by tethering it to a tree The sufferer ties a thread round his left wrist at night, and hangs the thread on a tree next morning. The fever is thus believed to be tied up to the tree, and the patient to be rid of it; but he must be careful not to pass by that tree again, otherwise the fever would break loose from its bonds and attack him afresh. A Flemish cure for the ague is to go early in the morning to an old willow, tie three knots in one of its branches, say, "Good-morrow, Old One, I give

thee the cold; good-morrow, Old One," then turn and run away without looking round. In Sonnenberg, if you would rid yourself of gout you should go to a young fir-tree and tie a knot in one of its twigs, saying, "God greet thee, noble fir. I bring thee my gout. Here will I tie a knot and bind my gout into it. In the name," etc.

Another way of transferring gout from a man to a tree is this. Pare the nails of the sufferer's fingers and clip some hairs from his legs. Bore a hole in an oak, stuff the nails and hair in the hole, stop up the hole again, and smear it with cow's dung. If, for three months thereafter, the patient is free of gout, you may be sure the oak has it in his stead. In Cheshire if you would be rid of warts, you have only to rub them with a piece of bacon, cut a slit in the bark of an ash-tree, and slip the bacon under the bark. Soon the warts will disappear from your hand, only however to reappear in the shape of rough excrescences or knobs on the bark of the tree. At Berkhampstead, in Hertfordshire, there used to be certain oak-trees which were long celebrated for the cure of ague. The transference of the malady to the tree was simple but painful. A lock of the sufferer's hair was pegged into an oak; then by a sudden wrench he left his hair and his ague behind him in the tree.

CHAPTER LVI

THE PUBLIC EXPULSION OF EVILS

§ 1. *The Omnipresence of Demons.*—In the foregoing chapter the primitive principle of the transference of ills to another person, animal, or thing was explained and illustrated. But similar means have been adopted to free a whole community from diverse evils that afflict it. Such attempts to dismiss at once the accumulated sorrows of a people are by no means rare or exceptional; on the contrary they have been made in many lands, and from being occasional they tend to become periodic and annual.

It needs some effort on our part to realise the frame of mind which prompts these attempts. Bred in a philosophy which strips nature of personality and reduces it to the unknown cause of an orderly series of impressions on our senses, we find it hard to put ourselves in the place of the savage, to whom the same impressions appear in the guise of spirits or the handiwork of spirits. For ages the army of spirits, once so near, has been receding farther and farther from us, banished by the magic wand of science from hearth and home, from ruined cell and ivied tower, from haunted glade and lonely mere, from the riven murky cloud that belches forth the lightning, and from those fairer clouds that pillow the silvery moon or fret with flakes of burning red the golden eve. The spirits are gone even from their last stronghold in the sky, whose blue arch no

longer passes, except with children, for the screen that hides from mortal eyes the glories of the celestial world. Only in poets' dreams or impassioned flights of oratory is it given to catch a glimpse of the last flutter of the standards of the retreating host, to hear the beat of their invisible wings, the sound of their mocking laughter, or the swell of angel music dying away in the distance. Far otherwise is it with the savage. To his imagination the world still teems with those motley beings whom a more sober philosophy has discarded. Fairies and goblins, ghosts and demons, still hover about him both waking and sleeping. They dog his footsteps, dazzle his senses, enter into him, harass and deceive and torment him in a thousand freakish and mischievous ways. The mishaps that befall him, the losses he sustains, the pains he has to endure, he commonly sets down, if not to the magic of his enemies, to the spite or anger or caprice of the spirits. Their constant presence wearies him, their sleepless malignity exasperates him; he longs with an unspeakable longing to be rid of them altogether, and from time to time, driven to bay, his patience utterly exhausted, he turns fiercely on his persecutors and makes a desperate effort to chase the whole pack of them from the land, to clear the air of their swarming multitudes, that he may breathe more freely and go on his way unmolested, at least for a time. Thus it comes about that the endeavour of primitive people to make a clean sweep of all their troubles generally takes the form of a grand hunting out and expulsion of devils or ghosts. They think that if they can only shake off these their accursed tormentors, they will make a fresh start in life, happy and innocent; the tales of Eden and the old poetic golden age will come true again.

§ 2. *The Occasional Expulsion of Evils.*—We can therefore understand why those general clearances of evil, to which from time to time the savage resorts, should commonly take the form of a forcible expulsion of devils. In these evil spirits primitive man sees the cause of many if not of most of his troubles, and he fancies that if he can only deliver himself from them, things will go better with him. The public attempts to expel the accumulated ills of a whole community may be divided into two classes, according as the expelled evils are immaterial and invisible or are embodied in a material vehicle or scapegoat. The former may be called the direct or immediate expulsion of evils; the latter the indirect or mediate expulsion, or the expulsion by scapegoat. We begin with examples of the former.

In the island of Rook, between New Guinea and New Britain, when any misfortune has happened, all the people run together, scream, curse, howl, and beat the air with sticks to drive away the devil, who is supposed to be the author of the mishap. From the spot where the mishap took place they drive him step by step to the sea, and on reaching the shore they redouble their shouts and blows in order to expel him from the island. He generally retires to the sea or to the island of Lottin. The natives of New Britain ascribe sickness, drought, the failure of crops, and in short all mis-

fortunes, to the influence of wicked spirits. So at times when many people sicken and die, as at the beginning of the rainy season, all the inhabitants of a district, armed with branches and clubs, go out by moonlight to the fields, where they beat and stamp on the ground with wild howls till morning, believing that this drives away the devils; and for the same purpose they rush through the village with burning torches. The natives of New Caledonia are said to believe that all evils are caused by a powerful and malignant spirit; hence in order to rid themselves of him they will from time to time dig a great pit, round which the whole tribe gathers. After cursing the demon, they fill up the pit with earth, and trample on the top with loud shouts. This they call burying the evil spirit. Among the Dieri tribe of Central Australia, when a serious illness occurs, the medicine-men expel Cootchie or the devil by beating the ground in and outside of the camp with the stuffed tail of a kangaroo, until they have chased the demon away to some distance from the camp.

When a village has been visited by a series of disasters or a severe epidemic, the inhabitants of Minahassa in Celebes lay the blame upon the devils who are infesting the village and who must be expelled from it. Accordingly, early one morning all the people, men, women, and children, quit their homes, carrying their household goods with them, and take up their quarters in temporary huts which have been erected outside the village. Here they spend several days, offering sacrifices and preparing for the final ceremony. At last the men, some wearing masks, others with their faces blackened, and so on, but all armed with swords, guns, pikes, or brooms, steal cautiously and silently back to the deserted village. Then, at a signal from the priest, they rush furiously up and down the streets and into and under the houses (which are raised on piles above the ground), yelling and striking on walls, doors, and windows, to drive away the devils. Next, the priests and the rest of the people come with the holy fire and march nine times round each house and thrice round the ladder that leads up to it, carrying the fire with them. Then they take the fire into the kitchen, where it must burn for three days continuously. The devils are now driven away, and great and general is the joy.

The Alfoors of Halmahera attribute epidemics to the devil who comes from other villages to carry them off. So, in order to rid the village of the disease, the sorcerer drives away the devil. From all the villagers he receives a costly garment and places it on four vessels, which he takes to the forest and leaves at the spot where the devil is supposed to be. Then with mocking words he bids the demon abandon the place. In the Kei Islands to the south-west of New Guinea, the evil spirits, who are quite distinct from the souls of the dead, form a mighty host. Almost every tree and every cave is the lodging-place of one of these fiends, who are moreover extremely irascible and apt to fly out on the smallest provocation. They manifest their displeasure by sending sickness and other calamities. Hence

in times of public misfortune, as when an epidemic is raging, and all other remedies have failed, the whole population go forth with the priest at their head to a place at some distance from the village. Here at sunset they erect a couple of poles with a cross-bar between them, to which they attach bags of rice, wooden models of pivot-guns, gongs, bracelets, and so on. Then, when everybody has taken his place at the poles and a death-like silence reigns, the priest lifts up his voice and addresses the spirits in their own language as follows: "Ho! ho! ho! ye evil spirits who dwell in the trees, ye evil spirits who live in the grottoes, ye evil spirits who lodge in the earth, we give you these pivot-guns, these gongs, etc. Let the sickness cease and not so many people die of it." Then everybody runs home as fast as their legs can carry them.

In the island of Nias, when a man is seriously ill and other remedies have been tried in vain, the sorcerer proceeds to exorcise the devil who is causing the illness. A pole is set up in front of the house, and from the top of the pole a rope of palm-leaves is stretched to the roof of the house. Then the sorcerer mounts the roof with a pig, which he kills and allows to roll from the roof to the ground. The devil, anxious to get the pig, lets himself down hastily from the roof by the rope of palm-leaves, and a good spirit, invoked by the sorcerer, prevents him from climbing up again. If this remedy fails, it is believed that other devils must still be lurking in the house. So a general hunt is made after them. All the doors and windows in the house are closed, except a single dormer-window in the roof. The men, shut up in the house, hew and slash with their swords right and left to the clash of gongs and the rub-a-dub of drums. Terrified at this onslaught, the devils escape by the dormer-window, and sliding down the rope of palm-leaves take themselves off. As all the doors and windows, except the one in the roof, are shut, the devils cannot get into the house again. In the case of an epidemic, the proceedings are similar. All the gates of the village, except one, are closed; every voice is raised, every gong and drum beaten, every sword brandished. Thus the devils are driven out and the last gate is shut behind them. For eight days thereafter the village is in a state of siege, no one being allowed to enter it.

When cholera has broken out in a Burmese village the able-bodied men scramble on the roofs and lay about them with bamboos and billets of wood, while all the rest of the population, old and young, stand below and thump drums, blow trumpets, yell, scream, beat floors, walls, tin pans, everything to make a din. This uproar, repeated on three successive nights, is thought to be very effective in driving away the cholera demons. When smallpox first appeared amongst the Kumis of South-Eastern India, they thought it was a devil come from Aracan. The villages were placed in a state of siege, no one being allowed to leave or enter them. A monkey was killed by being dashed on the ground, and its body was hung at the village gate. Its blood, mixed with small river pebbles, was sprinkled on

the houses, the threshold of every house was swept with the monkey's tail, and the fiend was adjured to depart.

When an epidemic is raging on the Gold Coast of West Africa, the people will sometimes turn out, armed with clubs and torches, to drive the evil spirits away. At a given signal the whole population begin with frightful yells to beat in every corner of the houses, then rush like mad into the streets waving torches and striking frantically in the empty air. The uproar goes on till somebody reports that the cowed and daunted demons have made good their escape by a gate of the town or village; the people stream out after them, pursue them for some distance into the forest, and warn them never to return. The expulsion of the devils is followed by a general massacre of all the cocks in the village or town, lest by their unseasonable crowing they should betray to the banished demons the direction they must take to return to their old homes. When sickness was prevalent in a Huron village, and all other remedies had been tried in vain, the Indians had recourse to the ceremony called *Lonouyroya*, "which is the principal invention and most proper means, so they say, to expel from the town or village the devils and evil spirits which cause, induce, and import all the maladies and infirmities which they suffer in body and mind." Accordingly, one evening the men would begin to rush like madmen about the village, breaking and upsetting whatever they came across in the wigwams. They threw fire and burning brands about the streets, and all night long they ran howling and singing without cessation. Then they all dreamed of something, a knife, dog, skin, or whatever it might be, and when morning came they went from wigwam to wigwam asking for presents. These they received silently, till the particular thing was given them which they had dreamed about. On receiving it they uttered a cry of joy and rushed from the hut, amid the congratulations of all present. The health of those who received what they had dreamed of was believed to be assured; whereas those who did not get what they had set their hearts upon regarded their fate as sealed.

Sometimes, instead of chasing the demon of disease from their homes, savages prefer to leave him in peaceable possession, while they themselves take to flight and attempt to prevent him from following in their tracks. Thus when the Patagonians were attacked by smallpox, which they attributed to the machinations of an evil spirit, they used to abandon their sick and flee, slashing the air with their weapons and throwing water about in order to keep off the dreadful pursuer; and when after several days' march they reached a place where they hoped to be beyond his reach, they used by way of precaution to plant all their cutting weapons with the sharp edges turned towards the quarter from which they had come, as if they were repelling a charge of cavalry. Similarly, when the Lules or Tonocotes Indians of the Gran Chaco were attacked by an epidemic, they regularly sought to evade it by flight, but in so doing they always followed a sinuous, not a straight, course; because they said that when the disease made after them he would be so exhausted by the turnings and windings of the route

that he would never be able to come up with them. When the Indians of New Mexico were decimated by smallpox or other infectious disease, they used to shift their quarters every day, retreating into the most sequestered parts of the mountains and choosing the thorniest thickets they could find, in the hope that the smallpox would be too afraid of scratching himself on the thorns to follow them. When some Chins on a visit to Rangoon were attacked by cholera, they went about with drawn swords to scare away the demon, and they spent the day hiding under bushes so that he might not be able to find them.

§ 3. *The Periodic Expulsion of Evils.*—The expulsion of evils, from being occasional, tends to become periodic. It comes to be thought desirable to have a general riddance of evil spirits at fixed times, usually once a year, in order that the people may make a fresh start in life, freed from all the malignant influences which have been long accumulating about them. Some of the Australian blacks annually expelled the ghosts of the dead from their territory. The ceremony was witnessed by the Rev. W. Ridley on the banks of the River Barwan. "A chorus of twenty, old and young, were singing and beating time with boomerangs. . . . Suddenly, from under a sheet of bark darted a man with his body whitened by pipeclay, his head and face coloured with lines of red and yellow, and a tuft of feathers fixed by means of a stick two feet above the crown of his head. He stood twenty minutes perfectly still, gazing upwards. An aboriginal who stood by told me he was looking for the ghosts of dead men. At last he began to move very slowly, and soon rushed to and fro at full speed, flourishing a branch as if to drive away some foes invisible to us. When I thought this pantomime must be almost over, ten more, similarly adorned, suddenly appeared from behind the trees, and the whole party joined in a brisk conflict with their mysterious assailants. . . . At last, after some rapid evolutions in which they put forth all their strength, they rested from the exciting toil which they had kept up all night and for some hours after sunrise; they seemed satisfied that the ghosts were driven away for twelve months. They were performing the same ceremony at every station along the river, and I am told it is an annual custom."

Certain seasons of the year mark themselves naturally out as appropriate moments for a general expulsion of devils. Such a moment occurs towards the close of an Arctic winter, when the sun reappears on the horizon after an absence of weeks or months. Accordingly, at Point Barrow, the most northerly extremity of Alaska, and nearly of America, the Esquimaux choose the moment of the sun's reappearance to hunt the mischievous spirit Tuña from every house. The ceremony was witnessed by the members of the United States Polar Expedition, who wintered at Point Barrow. A fire was built in front of the council-house, and an old woman was posted at the entrance to every house. The men gathered round the council-house while the young women and girls drove the spirit out of every house with their knives, stabbing viciously under the bunk and deer-skins,

and calling upon Tuña to be gone. When they thought he had been driven out of every hole and corner, they thrust him down through the hole in the floor and chased him into the open air with loud cries and frantic gestures. Meanwhile the old woman at the entrance of the house made passes with a long knife in the air to keep him from returning. Each party drove the spirit towards the fire and invited him to go into it. All were by this time drawn up in a semicircle round the fire, when several of the leading men made specific charges against the spirit; and each after his speech brushed his clothes violently, calling on the spirit to leave him and go into the fire. Two men now stepped forward with rifles loaded with blank cartridges, while a third brought a vessel of urine and flung it on the flames. At the same time one of the men fired a shot into the fire; and as the cloud of steam rose it received the other shot, which was supposed to finish Tuña for the time being.

In late autumn, when storms rage over the land and break the icy fetters by which the frozen sea is as yet but slightly bound, when the loosened floes are driven against each other and break with loud crashes, and when the cakes of ice are piled in wild disorder one upon another, the Esquimaux of Baffin Land fancy they hear the voices of the spirits who people the mischief-laden air. Then the ghosts of the dead knock wildly at the huts, which they cannot enter, and woe to the hapless wight whom they catch; he soon sickens and dies. Then the phantom of a huge hairless dog pursues the real dogs, which expire in convulsions and cramps at sight of him. All the countless spirits of evil are abroad striving to bring sickness and death, foul weather and failure in hunting on the Esquimaux. Most dreaded of all these spectral visitants are Sedna, mistress of the nether world, and her father, to whose share dead Esquimaux fall. While the other spirits fill the air and the water, she rises from under ground. It is then a busy season for the wizards. In every house you may hear them singing and praying, while they conjure the spirits, seated in a mystic gloom at the back of the hut, which is dimly lit by a lamp burning low. The hardest task of all is to drive away Sedna, and this is reserved for the most powerful enchanter. A rope is coiled on the floor of a large hut in such a way as to leave a small opening at the top, which represents the breathing hole of a seal. Two enchanters stand beside it, one of them grasping a spear as if he were watching a seal-hole in winter, the other holding the harpoon-line. A third sorcerer sits at the back of the hut chanting a magic song to lure Sedna to the spot. Now she is heard approaching under the floor of the hut, breathing heavily; now she emerges at the hole; now she is harpooned and sinks away in angry haste, dragging the harpoon with her, while the two men hold on to the line with all their might. The struggle is severe, but at last by a desperate wrench she tears herself away and returns to her dwelling in Adlivun. When the harpoon is drawn up out of the hole it is found to be splashed with blood, which the enchanters proudly exhibit as a proof of their prowess. Thus Sedna

and the other evil spirits are at last driven away, and next day a great festival is celebrated by old and young in honour of the event. But they must still be cautious, for the wounded Sedna is furious and will seize any one she may find outside of his hut; so they all wear amulets on the top of their hoods to protect themselves against her. These amulets consist of pieces of the first garments that they wore after birth.

The Iroquois inaugurated the new year in January, February, or March (the time varied) with a "festival of dreams" like that which the Hurons observed on special occasions. The whole ceremonies lasted several days, or even weeks, and formed a kind of saturnalia. Men and women, variously disguised, went from wigwam to wigwam smashing and throwing down whatever they came across. It was a time of general license; the people were supposed to be out of their senses, and therefore not to be responsible for what they did. Accordingly, many seized the opportunity of paying off old scores by belabouring obnoxious persons, drenching them with ice-cold water, and covering them with filth or hot ashes. Others seized burning brands or coals and flung them at the heads of the first persons they met. The only way of escaping from these persecutors was to guess what they had dreamed of. On one day of the festival the ceremony of driving away evil spirits from the village took place. Men clothed in the skins of wild beasts, their faces covered with hideous masks, and their hands with the shell of the tortoise, went from hut to hut making frightful noises; in every hut they took the fuel from the fire and scattered the embers and ashes about the floor with their hands. The general confession of sins which preceded the festival was probably a preparation for the public expulsion of evil influences; it was a way of stripping the people of their moral burdens, that these might be collected and cast out.

In September the Incas of Peru celebrated a festival called Situa, the object of which was to banish from the capital and its vicinity all disease and trouble. The festival fell in September because the rains begin about this time, and with the first rains there was generally much sickness. As a preparation for the festival the people fasted on the first day of the moon after the autumnal equinox. Having fasted during the day, and the night being come, they baked a coarse paste of maize. This paste was made of two sorts. One was kneaded with the blood of children aged from five to ten years, the blood being obtained by bleeding the children between the eyebrows. These two kinds of paste were baked separately, because they were for different uses. Each family assembled at the house of the eldest brother to celebrate the feast; and those who had no elder brother went to the house of their next relation of greater age. On the same night all who had fasted during the day washed their bodies, and taking a little of the blood-kneaded paste, rubbed it over their head, face, breast, shoulders, arms and legs. They did this in order that the paste might take away all their infirmities. After this the head of the family

anointed the threshold with the same paste, and left it there as a token that the inmates of the house had performed their ablutions and cleansed their bodies. Meantime the High Priest performed the same ceremonies in the temple of the Sun. As soon as the Sun rose, all the people worshipped and besought him to drive all evils out of the city, and then they broke their fast with the paste that had been kneaded without blood. When they had paid their worship and broken their fast, which they did at a stated hour, in order that all might adore the Sun as one man, an Inca of the blood royal came forth from the fortress, as a messenger of the Sun, richly dressed, with his mantle girded round his body, and a lance in his hand. The lance was decked with feathers of many hues, extending from the blade to the socket, and fastened with rings of gold. He ran down the hill from the fortress brandishing his lance, till he reached the centre of the great square, where stood the golden urn, like a fountain, that was used for the sacrifice of the fermented juice of the maize. Here four other Incas of the blood royal awaited him, each with a lance in his hand, and his mantle girded up to run. The messenger touched their four lances with his lance, and told them that the Sun bade them, as his messengers, drive the evils out of the city. The four Incas then separated and ran down the four royal roads which led out of the city to the four quarters of the world. While they ran, all the people, great and small, came to the doors of their houses, and with great shouts of joy and gladness shook their clothes, as if they were shaking off dust, while they cried, "Let the evils be gone. How greatly desired has this festival been by us. O Creator of all things, permit us to reach another year, that we may see another feast like this." After they had shaken their clothes, they passed their hands over their heads, faces, arms, and legs, as if in the act of washing. All this was done to drive the evils out of their houses, that the messengers of the Sun might banish them from the city; and it was done not only in the streets through which the Incas ran, but generally in all quarters of the city. Moreover, they all danced, the Inca himself amongst them, and bathed in the rivers and fountains, saying that their maladies would come out of them. Then they took great torches of straw, bound round with cords. These they lighted, and passed from one to the other, striking each other with them, and saying, "Let all harm go away." Meanwhile the runners ran with their lances for a quarter of a league outside the city, where they found four other Incas ready, who received the lances from their hands and ran with them. Thus the lances were carried by relays of runners for a distance of five or six leagues, at the end of which the runners washed themselves and their weapons in rivers, and set up the lances, in sign of a boundary within which the banished evils might not return.

The negroes of Guinea annually banish the devil from all their towns with much ceremony at a time set apart for the purpose. At Axim, on the Gold Coast, this annual expulsion is preceded by a feast of eight days, during which mirth and jollity, skipping, dancing, and

singing prevail, and "a perfect lampooning liberty is allowed, and scandal so highly exalted, that they may freely sing of all the faults, villanies, and frauds of their superiors as well as inferiors, without punishment, or so much as the least interruption." On the eighth day they hunt out the devil with a dismal cry, running after him and pelting him with sticks, stones, and whatever comes to hand. When they have driven him far enough out of the town, they all return. In this way he is expelled from more than a hundred towns at the same time. To make sure that he does not return to their houses, the women wash and scour all their wooden and earthen vessels, "to free them from all uncleanness and the devil."

At Cape Coast Castle, on the Gold Coast, the ceremony was witnessed on the ninth of October, 1844, by an Englishman, who has described it as follows: "To-night the annual custom of driving the evil spirit, Abonsam, out of the town has taken place. As soon as the eight o'clock gun fired in the fort the people began firing muskets in their houses, turning all their furniture out of doors, beating about in every corner of the rooms with sticks, etc., and screaming as loudly as possible, in order to frighten the devil. Being driven out of the houses, as they imagine, they sallied forth into the streets, throwing lighted torches about, shouting, screaming, beating sticks together, rattling old pans, making the most horrid noise, in order to drive him out of the town into the sea. The custom is preceded by four weeks' dead silence; no gun is allowed to be fired, no drum to be beaten, no palaver to be made between man and man. If, during these weeks, two natives should disagree and make a noise in the town, they are immediately taken before the king and fined heavily. If a dog or pig, sheep or goat be found at large in the street, it may be killed, or taken by anyone, the former owner not being allowed to demand any compensation. This silence is designed to deceive Abonsam, that, being off his guard, he may be taken by surprise, and frightened out of the place. If anyone die during the silence, his relatives are not allowed to weep until the four weeks have been completed."

Sometimes the date of the annual expulsion of devils is fixed with reference to the agricultural seasons. Thus among the Hos of Togoland, in West Africa, the expulsion is performed annually before the people partake of the new yams. The chiefs summon the priests and magicians and tell them that the people are now to eat the new yams and be merry, therefore they must cleanse the town and remove the evils. Accordingly the evil spirits, witches, and all the ills that infest the people are conjured into bundles of leaves and creepers, fastened to poles, which are carried away and set up in the earth on various roads outside the town. During the following night no fire may be lit and no food eaten. Next morning the women sweep out their hearths and houses, and deposit the sweepings on broken wooden plates. Then the people pray, saying, "All ye sicknesses that are in our body and plague us, we are come to-day to throw you out." Thereupon they run as fast as they can in the direction of Mount Adaklu, smiting

their mouths and screaming, "Out to-day! Out to-day! That which kills anybody, out to-day! Ye evil spirits, out to-day! and all that causes our heads to ache, out to-day! Anlo and Adaklu are the places whither all ill shall betake itself!" When they have come to a certain tree on Mount Adaklu, they throw everything away and return home.

At Kiriwina, in South-Eastern New Guinea, when the new yams had been harvested, the people feasted and danced for many days, and a great deal of property, such as armlets, native money, and so forth, was displayed conspicuously on a platform erected for the purpose. When the festivities were over, all the people gathered together and expelled the spirits from the village by shouting, beating the posts of the houses, and overturning everything under which a wily spirit might be supposed to lurk. The explanation which the people gave to a missionary was that they had entertained and feasted the spirits and provided them with riches, and it was now time for them to take their departure. Had they not seen the dances, and heard the songs, and gorged themselves on the souls of the yams, and appropriated the souls of the money and all the other fine things set out on the platform? What more could the spirits want? So out they must go.

Among the Hos of North-Eastern India the great festival of the year is the harvest home, held in January, when the granaries are full of grain, and the people, to use their own expression, are full of devilry. "They have a strange notion that at this period, men and women are so overcharged with vicious propensities, that it is absolutely necessary for the safety of the person to let off steam by allowing for a time full vent to the passions." The ceremonies open with a sacrifice to the village god of three fowls, a cock and two hens, one of which must be black. Along with them are offered flowers of the palas tree (*Butea frondosa*), bread made from rice-flour, and sesamum seeds. These offerings are presented by the village priest, who prays that during the year about to begin they and their children may be preserved from all misfortune and sickness, and that they may have seasonable rain and good crops. Prayer is also made in some places for the souls of the dead. At this time an evil spirit is supposed to infest the place, and to get rid of it men, women, and children go in procession round and through every part of the village with sticks in their hands, as if beating for game, singing a wild chant, and shouting vociferously, till they feel assured that the evil spirit must have fled. Then they give themselves up to feasting and drinking rice-beer, till they are in a fit state for the wild debauch which follows. The festival now "becomes a saturnale, during which servants forget their duty to their masters, children their reverence for parents, men their respect for women, and women all notions of modesty, delicacy, and gentleness; they become raging bacchantes." Usually the Hos are quiet and reserved in manner, decorous and gentle to women. But during this festival "their natures appear to undergo a temporary change. Sons and daughters revile their parents in gross language, and parents

their children; men and women become almost like animals in the indulgence of their amorous propensities." The Mundaris, kinsmen and neighbours of the Hos, keep the festival in much the same manner. "The resemblance to a Saturnale is very complete, as at this festival the farm labourers are feasted by their masters, and allowed the utmost freedom of speech in addressing them. It is the festival of the harvest home; the termination of one year's toil, and a slight respite from it before they commence again."

Amongst some of the Hindoo Koosh tribes, as among the Hos and Mundaris, the expulsion of devils takes place after harvest. When the last crop of autumn has been got in, it is thought necessary to drive away evil spirits from the granaries. A kind of porridge is eaten, and the head of the family takes his matchlock and fires it into the floor. Then, going outside, he sets to work loading and firing till his powder-horn is exhausted, while all his neighbours are similarly employed. The next day is spent in rejoicings. In Chitral this festival is called "devil-driving." On the other hand the Khonds of India expel the devils at seed-time instead of at harvest. At this time they worship Pitteri Pennu, the god of increase and of gain in every shape. On the first day of the festival a rude car is made of a basket set upon a few sticks, tied upon the bamboo rollers for wheels. The priest takes this car first to the house of the lineal head of the tribe, to whom precedence is given in all ceremonies connected with agriculture. Here he receives a little of each kind of seed and some feathers. He then takes the car to all the other houses in the village, each of which contributes the same things. Lastly, the car is conducted to a field without the village, attended by all the young men, who beat each other and strike the air violently with long sticks. The seed thus carried out is called the share of the "evil spirits, spoilers of the seed." "These are considered to be driven out with the car; and when it and its contents are abandoned to them, they are held to have no excuse for interfering with the rest of the seed-corn."

The people of Bali, an island to the east of Java, have periodical expulsions of devils upon a great scale. Generally the time chosen for the expulsion is the day of the "dark moon" in the ninth month. When the demons have been long unmolested the country is said to be "warm," and the priest issues orders to expel them by force, lest the whole of Bali should be rendered uninhabitable. On the day appointed the people of the village or district assemble at the principal temple. Here at a cross-road offerings are set out for the devils. After prayers have been recited by the priests, the blast of a horn summons the devils to partake of the meal which has been prepared for them. At the same time a number of men step forward and light their torches at the holy lamp which burns before the chief priest. Immediately afterwards, followed by the bystanders, they spread in all directions and march through the streets and lanes crying, "Depart! go away!" Wherever they pass, the people who have stayed at home hasten, by a deafening clatter on doors, beams, rice-blocks, and so forth, to take

their share in the expulsion of devils. Thus chased from the houses, the fiends flee to the banquet which has been set out for them; but here the priest receives them with curses which finally drive them from the district. When the last devil has taken his departure, the uproar is succeeded by a dead silence, which lasts during the next day also. The devils, it is thought, are anxious to return to their old homes, and in order to make them think that Bali is not Bali but some desert island, no one may stir from his own abode for twenty-four hours. Even ordinary household work, including cooking, is discontinued. Only the watchmen may show themselves in the streets. Wreaths of thorns and leaves are hung at all the entrances to warn strangers from entering. Not till the third day is this state of siege raised, and even then it is forbidden to work at the rice-fields or to buy and sell in the market. Most people still stay at home, whiling away the time with cards and dice.

In Tonquin a *theckydaw* or general expulsion of malevolent spirits commonly took place once a year, especially if there was a great mortality amongst men, the elephants or horses of the general's stable, or the cattle of the country, "the cause of which they attribute to the malicious spirits of such men as have been put to death for treason, rebellion, and conspiring the death of the king, general, or princes, and that in revenge of the punishment they have suffered, they are bent to destroy everything and commit horrible violence. To prevent which their superstition has suggested to them the institution of this *theckydaw,* as a proper means to drive the devil away, and purge the country of evil spirits." The day appointed for the ceremony was generally the twenty-fifth of February, one month after the beginning of the new year, which fell on the twenty-fifth of January. The intermediate month was a season of feasting, merry-making of all kinds, and general licence. During the whole month the great seal was kept shut up in a box, face downwards, and the law was, as it were, laid asleep. All courts of justice were closed; debtors could not be seized; small crimes, such as petty larceny, fighting, and assault, escaped with impunity; only treason and murder were taken account of and the malefactors detained till the great seal should come into operation again. At the close of the saturnalia the wicked spirits were driven away. Great masses of troops and artillery having been drawn up with flying colours and all the pomp of war, "the general beginneth then to offer meat offerings to the criminal devils and malevolent spirits (for it is usual and customary likewise amongst them to feast the condemned before their execution), inviting them to eat and drink, when presently he accuses them in a strange language, by characters and figures, etc., of many offences and crimes committed by them, as to their having disquieted the land, killed his elephants and horses, etc., for all which they justly deserve to be chastised and banished the country. Whereupon three great guns are fired as the last signal; upon which all the artillery and musquets are discharged, that, by their most terrible noise the devils may be driven away; and they are

so blind as to believe for certain, that they really and effectually put them to flight."

In Cambodia the expulsion of evil spirits took place in March. Bits of broken statues and stones, considered as the abode of the demons, were collected and brought to the capital. Here as many elephants were collected as could be got together. On the evening of the full moon volleys of musketry were fired and the elephants charged furiously to put the devils to flight. The ceremony was performed on three successive days. In Siam the banishment of demons is annually carried into effect on the last day of the old year. A signal gun is fired from the palace; it is answered from the next station, and so on from station to station, till the firing has reached the outer gate of the city. Thus the demons are driven out step by step. As soon as this is done a consecrated rope is fastened round the circuit of the city walls to prevent the banished demons from returning. The rope is made of tough couch-grass and is painted in alternate stripes of red, yellow, and blue.

Annual expulsions of demons, witches, or evil influences appear to have been common among the heathen of Europe, if we may judge from the relics of such customs among their descendants at the present day. Thus among the heathen Wotyaks, a Finnish people of Eastern Russia, all the young girls of the village assemble on the last day of the year or on New Year's Day, armed with sticks, the ends of which are split in nine places. With these they beat every corner of the house and yard, saying, "We are driving Satan out of the village." Afterwards the sticks are thrown into the river below the village, and as they float down stream Satan goes with them to the next village, from which he must be driven out in turn. In some villages the expulsion is managed otherwise. The unmarried men receive from every house in the village groats, flesh, and brandy. These they take to the fields, light a fire under a fir-tree, boil the groats, and eat of the food they have brought with them, after pronouncing the words, "Go away into the wilderness, come not into the house." Then they return to the village and enter every house where there are young women. They take hold of the young women and throw them into the snow, saying, "May the spirits of disease leave you." The remains of the groats and the other food are then distributed among all the houses in proportion to the amount that each contributed, and each family consumes its share. According to a Wotyak of the Malmyz district the young men throw into the snow whomever they find in the houses, and this is called "driving out Satan"; moreover, some of the boiled groats are cast into the fire with the words, "O god, afflict us not with sickness and pestilence, give us not up as a prey to the spirits of the wood." But the most antique form of the ceremony is that observed by the Wotyaks of the Kasan Government. First of all a sacrifice is offered to the Devil at noon. Then all the men assemble on horseback in the centre of the village, and decide with which house they shall begin. When this question, which often gives rise to hot disputes, is settled, they tether

their horses to the paling, and arm themselves with whips, clubs of lime-wood and bundles of lighted twigs. The lighted twigs are believed to have the greatest terrors for Satan. Thus armed, they proceed with frightful cries to beat every corner of the house and yard, then shut the door, and spit at the ejected fiend. So they go from house to house, till the Devil has been driven from every one. Then they mount their horses and ride out of the village, yelling wildly and brandishing their clubs in every direction. Outside of the village they fling away the clubs and spit once more at the Devil. The Cheremiss, another Finnish people of Eastern Russia, chase Satan from their dwellings by beating the walls with cudgels of lime-wood. For the same purpose they fire guns, stab the ground with knives, and insert burning chips of wood in the crevices. Also they leap over bonfires, shaking out their garments as they do so; and in some districts they blow on long trumpets of lime-tree bark to frighten him away. When he has fled to the wood, they pelt the trees with some of the cheese-cakes and eggs which furnished the feast.

In Christian Europe the old heathen custom of expelling the powers of evil at certain times of the year has survived to modern times. Thus in some villages of Calabria the month of March is inaugurated with the expulsion of the witches. It takes place at night to the sound of the church bells, the people running about the streets and crying, "March is come." They say that the witches roam about in March, and the ceremony is repeated every Friday evening during the month. Often, as might have been anticipated, the ancient pagan rite has attached itself to church festivals. In Albania on Easter Eve the young people light torches of resinous wood and march in procession, swinging them, through the village. At last they throw the torches into the river, crying, "Ha, Kore! we throw you into the river, like these torches, that you may never return." Silesian peasants believe that on Good Friday the witches go their rounds and have great power for mischief. Hence about Oels, near Strehlitz, the people on that day arm themselves with old brooms and drive the witches from house and home, from farmyard and cattle-stall, making a great uproar and clatter as they do so.

In Central Europe the favourite time for expelling the witches is, or was, Walpurgis Night, the Eve of May Day, when the baleful powers of these mischievous beings were supposed to be at their height. In the Tyrol, for example, as in other places, the expulsion of the powers of evil at this season goes by the name of "Burning out the Witches." It takes place on May Day, but people have been busy with their preparations for days before. On a Thursday at midnight bundles are made up of resinous splinters, black and red spotted hemlock, caperspurge, rosemary, and twigs of the sloe. These are kept and burned on May Day by men who must first have received plenary absolution from the Church. On the last three days of April all the houses are cleansed and fumigated with juniper berries and

rue. On May Day, when the evening bell has rung and the twilight is falling, the ceremony of "Burning out the Witches" begins. Men and boys make a racket with whips, bells, pots, and pans; the women carry censers; the dogs are unchained and run barking and yelping about. As soon as the church bells begin to ring, the bundles of twigs, fastened on poles, are set on fire and the incense is ignited. Then all the house-bells and dinner-bells are rung, pots and pans are clashed, dogs bark, every one must make a noise. And amid this hubbub all scream at the pitch of their voices:

"Witch flee, flee from here, or it will go ill with thee."

Then they run seven times round the houses, the yards, and the village. So the witches are smoked out of their lurking-places and driven away. The custom of expelling the witches on Walpurgis Night is still, or was down to recent years, observed in many parts of Bavaria and among the Germans of Bohemia. Thus in the Böhmerwald Mountains all the young fellows of the village assemble after sunset on some height, especially at a cross-road, and crack whips for a while in unison with all their strength. This drives away the witches; for so far as the sound of the whips is heard, these maleficent beings can do no harm. In some places, while the young men are cracking their whips, the herdsmen wind their horns, and the long-drawn notes, heard far off in the silence of night, are very effectual for banning the witches.

Another witching time is the period of twelve days between Christmas and Epiphany. Hence in some parts of Silesia the people burn pine-resin all night long between Christmas and the New Year in order that the pungent smoke may drive witches and evil spirits far away from house and homestead; and on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve they fire shots over fields and meadows, into shrubs and trees, and wrap straw round the fruit-trees, to prevent the spirits from doing them harm. On New Year's Eve, which is Saint Sylvester's Day, Bohemian lads, armed with guns, form themselves into circles and fire thrice into the air. This is called "Shooting the Witches" and is supposed to frighten the witches away. The last of the mystic twelve days is Epiphany or Twelfth Night, and it has been selected as a proper season for the expulsion of the powers of evil in various parts of Europe. Thus at Brunnen, on the Lake of Lucerne, boys go about in procession on Twelfth Night carrying torches and making a great noise with horns, bells, whips, and so forth to frighten away two female spirits of the wood, Strudeli and Strätteli. The people think that if they do not make enough noise, there will be little fruit that year. Again, in Labruguière, a canton of Southern France, on the eve of Twelfth Day the people run through the streets, jangling bells, clattering kettles, and doing everything to make a discordant noise. Then by the light of torches and blazing faggots they set up a prodigious hue and cry, an ear-splitting uproar, hoping thereby to chase all the wandering ghosts and devils from the town.

CHAPTER LVII

PUBLIC SCAPEGOATS

§ 1. *The Expulsion of Embodied Evils.*—Thus far we have dealt with that class of the general expulsion of evils which I have called direct or immediate. In this class the evils are invisible, at least to common eyes, and the mode of deliverance consists for the most part in beating the empty air and raising such a hubbub as may scare the mischievous spirits and put them to flight. It remains to illustrate the second class of expulsions, in which the evil influences are embodied in a visible form or are at least supposed to be loaded upon a material medium, which acts as a vehicle to draw them off from the people, village, or town.

The Pomos of California celebrate an expulsion of devils every seven years, at which the devils are represented by disguised men. "Twenty or thirty men array themselves in harlequin rig and barbaric paint, and put vessels of pitch on their heads; then they secretly go out into the surrounding mountains. These are to personify the devils. A herald goes up to the top of the assembly-house, and makes a speech to the multitude. At a signal agreed upon in the evening the masqueraders come in from the mountains, with the vessels of pitch flaming on their heads, and with all the frightful accessories of noise, motion, and costume which the savage mind can devise in representation of demons. The terrified women and children flee for life, the men huddle them inside a circle, and, on the principle of fighting the devil with fire, they swing blazing firebrands in the air, yell, whoop, and make frantic dashes at the marauding and bloodthirsty devils, so creating a terrific spectacle, and striking great fear into the hearts of the assembled hundreds of women, who are screaming and fainting and clinging to their valorous protectors. Finally the devils succeed in getting into the assembly-house, and the bravest of the men enter and hold a parley with them. As a conclusion of the whole farce, the men summon courage, the devils are expelled from the assembly-house, and with a prodigious row and racket of sham fighting are chased away into the mountains." In spring, as soon as the willow-leaves were full grown on the banks of the river, the Mandan Indians celebrated their great annual festival, one of the features of which was the expulsion of the devil. A man, painted black to represent the devil, entered the village from the prairie, chased and frightened the women, and acted the part of a buffalo bull in the buffalo dance, the object of which was to ensure a plentiful supply of buffaloes during the ensuing year. Finally he was chased from the village, the women pursuing him with hisses and gibes, beating him with sticks, and pelting him with dirt.

Some of the native tribes of Central Queensland believe in a noxious being called Molonga, who prowls unseen and would kill men and

violate women if certain ceremonies were not performed. These ceremonies last for five nights and consist of dances, in which only men, fantastically painted and adorned, take part. On the fifth night Molonga himself, personified by a man tricked out with red ochre and feathers and carrying a long feather-tipped spear, rushes forth from the darkness at the spectators and makes as if he would run them through. Great is the excitement, loud are the shrieks and shouts, but after another feigned attack the demon vanishes in the gloom. On the last night of the year the palace of the Kings of Cambodia is purged of devils. Men painted as fiends are chased by elephants about the palace courts. When they have been expelled, a consecrated thread of cotton is stretched round the palace to keep them out. In Munzerabad, a district of Mysore in Southern India, when cholera or smallpox has broken out in a parish, the inhabitants assemble and conjure the demon of the disease into a wooden image, which they carry, generally at midnight, into the next parish. The inhabitants of that parish in like manner pass the image on to their neighbours, and thus the demon is expelled from one village after another, until he comes to the bank of a river into which he is finally thrown.

Oftener, however, the expelled demons are not represented at all, but are understood to be present invisibly in the material and visible vehicle which conveys them away. Here, again, it will be convenient to distinguish between occasional and periodical expulsions. We begin with the former.

§ 2. *The Occasional Expulsion of Evils in a Material Vehicle.*—The vehicle which conveys away the demons may be of various kinds. A common one is a little ship or boat. Thus, in the southern district of the island of Ceram, when a whole village suffers from sickness, a small ship is made and filled with rice, tobacco, eggs, and so forth, which have been contributed by all the people. A little sail is hoisted on the ship. When all is ready, a man calls out in a very loud voice, "O all ye sicknesses, ye smallpoxes, agues, measles, etc., who have visited us so long and wasted us so sorely, but who now cease to plague us, we have made ready this ship for you, and we have furnished you with provender sufficient for the voyage. Ye shall have no lack of food nor of betel-leaves nor of areca nuts nor of tobacco. Depart, and sail away from us directly; never come near us again; but go to a land which is far from here. Let all the tides and winds waft you speedily thither, and so convey you thither that for the time to come we may live sound and well, and that we may never see the sun rise on you again." Then ten or twelve men carry the vessel to the shore, and let it drift away with the land-breeze, feeling convinced that they are free from sickness for ever, or at least till the next time. If sickness attacks them again, they are sure it is not the same sickness, but a different one, which in due time they dismiss in the same manner. When the demon-laden bark is lost to sight, the bearers return to the village, whereupon a man cries out, "The sicknesses are now gone,

vanished, expelled, and sailed away." At this all the people come running out of their houses, passing the word from one to the other with great joy, beating on gongs and on tinkling instruments.

Similar ceremonies are commonly resorted to in other East Indian islands. Thus in Timor-laut, to mislead the demons who are causing sickness, a small proa, containing the image of a man and provisioned for a long voyage, is allowed to drift away with wind and tide. As it is being launched, the people cry, "O sickness, go from here; turn back; what do you here in this poor land?" Three days after this ceremony a pig is killed, and part of the flesh is offered to Dudilaa, who lives in the sun. One of the oldest men says, "Old sir, I beseech you make well the grand-children, children, women, and men, that we may be able to eat pork and rice and to drink palm-wine. I will keep my promise. Eat your share, and make all the people in the village well." If the proa is stranded at any inhabited spot, the sickness will break out there. Hence a stranded proa excites much alarm amongst the coast population, and they immediately burn it, because demons fly from fire. In the island of Buru the proa which carries away the demons of disease is about twenty feet long, rigged out with sails, oars, anchor, and so on, and well stocked with provisions. For a day and a night the people beat gongs and drums, and rush about to frighten the demons. Next morning ten stalwart young men strike the people with branches, which have been previously dipped in an earthen pot of water. As soon as they have done so, they run down to the beach, put the branches on board the proa, launch another boat in great haste, and tow the disease-burdened bark far out to sea. There they cast it off, and one of them calls out, "Grandfather Smallpox, go away—go willingly away—go visit another land; we have made you food ready for the voyage, we have now nothing more to give." When they have landed, all the people bathe together in the sea. In this ceremony the reason for striking the people with the branches is clearly to rid them of the disease-demons, which are then supposed to be transferred to the branches. Hence the haste with which the branches are deposited in the proa and towed away to sea. So in the inland districts of Ceram, when smallpox or other sickness is raging, the priest strikes all the houses with consecrated branches, which are then thrown into the river, to be carried down to the sea; exactly as amongst the Wotyaks of Russia the sticks which have been used for expelling the devils from the village are thrown into the river, that the current may sweep the baleful burden away. The plan of putting puppets in the boat to represent sick persons, in order to lure the demons after them, is not uncommon. For example, most of the pagan tribes on the coast of Borneo seek to drive away epidemic disease as follows. They carve one or more rough human images from the pith of the sago palm and place them on a small raft or boat or full-rigged Malay ship together with rice and other food. The boat is decked with blossoms of the areca palm and with ribbons made from its leaves.

and thus adorned the little craft is allowed to float out to sea with the ebb-tide, bearing, as the people fondly think or hope, the sickness away with it.

Often the vehicle which carries away the collected demons or ills of a whole community is an animal or scapegoat. In the Central Provinces of India, when cholera breaks out in a village, every one retires after sunset to his house. The priests then parade the streets, taking from the roof of each house a straw, which is burnt with an offering of rice, ghee, and turmeric, at some shrine to the east of the village. Chickens daubed with vermilion are driven away in the direction of the smoke, and are believed to carry the disease with them. If they fail, goats are tried, and last of all pigs. When cholera rages among the Bhars, Mallans, and Kurmis of India, they take a goat or a buffalo—in either case the animal must be a female, and as black as possible—then having tied some grain, cloves, and red lead in a yellow cloth on its back they turn it out of the village. The animal is conducted beyond the boundary and not allowed to return. Sometimes the buffalo is marked with a red pigment and driven to the next village, where he carries the plague with him.

Amongst the Dinkas, a pastoral people of the White Nile, each family possesses a sacred cow. When the country is threatened with war, famine, or any other public calamity, the chiefs of the village require a particular family to surrender their sacred cow to serve as a scapegoat. The animal is driven by the women to the brink of the river and across it to the other bank, there to wander in the wilderness and fall a prey to ravening beasts. Then the women return in silence and without looking behind them; were they to cast a backward glance, they imagine that the ceremony would have no effect. In 1857, when the Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru were suffering from a plague, they loaded a black llama with the clothes of the plague-stricken people, sprinkled brandy on the clothes, and then turned the animal loose on the mountains, hoping that it would carry the pest away with it.

Occasionally the scapegoat is a man. For example, from time to time the gods used to warn the King of Uganda that his foes the Banyoro were working magic against him and his people to make them die of disease. To avert such a catastrophe the king would send a scapegoat to the frontier of Bunyoro, the land of the enemy. The scapegoat consisted of either a man and a boy or a woman and her child, chosen because of some mark or bodily defect, which the gods had noted and by which the victims were to be recognised. With the human victims were sent a cow, a goat, a fowl, and a dog; and a strong guard escorted them to the land which the god had indicated. There the limbs of the victims were broken and they were left to die a lingering death in the enemy's country, being too crippled to crawl back to Uganda. The disease or plague was thought to have been thus transferred to the victims and to have been conveyed back in their persons to the land from which it came.

Some of the aboriginal tribes of China, as a protection against pestilence, select a man of great muscular strength to act the part of scapegoat. Having besmeared his face with paint, he performs many antics with the view of enticing all pestilential and noxious influences to attach themselves to him only. He is assisted by a priest. Finally the scapegoat, hotly pursued by men and women beating gongs and tom-toms, is driven with great haste out of the town or village. In the Punjaub a cure for the murrain is to hire a man of the Chamar caste, turn his face away from the village, brand him with a red-hot sickle, and let him go out into the jungle taking the murrain with him. He must not look back.

§ 3. *The Periodic Expulsion of Evils in a Material Vehicle.*—The mediate expulsion of evils by means of a scapegoat or other material vehicle, like the immediate expulsion of them in invisible form, tends to become periodic, and for a like reason. Thus every year, generally in March, the people of Leti, Moa, and Lakor, islands of the Indian Archipelago, send away all their diseases to sea. They make a proa about six feet long, rig it with sails, oars, rudder, and other gear, and every family deposits in it some rice, fruit, a fowl, two eggs, insects that ravage the fields, and so on. Then they let it drift away to sea, saying, "Take away from here all kinds of sickness, take them to other islands, to other lands, distribute them in places that lie eastward, where the sun rises." The Biajas of Borneo annually send to sea a little bark laden with the sins and misfortunes of the people. The crew of any ship that falls in with the ill-omened bark at sea will suffer all the sorrows with which it is laden. A like custom is annually observed by the Dusuns of the Tuaran district in British North Borneo. The ceremony is the most important of the whole year. Its aim is to bring good luck to the village during the ensuing year by solemnly expelling all the evil spirits that may have collected in or about the houses throughout the last twelve months. The task of routing out the demons and banishing them devolves chiefly on women. Dressed in their finest array, they go in procession through the village. One of them carries a small sucking pig in a basket on her back; and all of them bear wands, with which they belabour the little pig at the appropriate moment; its squeals help to attract the vagrant spirits. At every house the women dance and sing, clashing castanets or cymbals of brass and jingling bunches of little brass bells in both hands. When the performance has been repeated at every house in the village, the procession defiles down to the river, and all the evil spirits, which the performers have chased from the houses, follow them to the edge of the water. There a raft has been made ready and moored to the bank. It contains offerings of food, cloth, cooking-pots, and swords; and the deck is crowded with figures of men, women, animals, and birds, all made out of the leaves of the sago palm. The evil spirits now embark on the raft, and when they are all aboard, it is pushed off and allowed to float down with the current, carrying the demons with it. Should the raft

run aground near the village, it is shoved off with all speed, lest the invisible passengers should seize the opportunity of landing and returning to the village. Finally, the sufferings of the little pig, whose squeals served to decoy the demons from their lurking-places, are terminated by death, for it is killed and its carcase thrown away.

Every year, at the beginning of the dry season, the Nicobar Islanders carry the model of a ship through their villages. The devils are chased out of the huts, and driven on board the little ship, which is then launched and suffered to sail away with the wind. The ceremony has been described by a catechist, who witnessed it at Car Nicobar in July 1897. For three days the people were busy preparing two very large floating cars, shaped like canoes, fitted with sails, and loaded with certain leaves, which possessed the valuable property of expelling devils. While the young people were thus engaged, the exorcists and the elders sat in a house singing songs by turns; but often they would come forth, pace the beach armed with rods, and forbid the devil to enter the village. The fourth day of the solemnity bore a name which means "Expelling the Devil by Sails." In the evening all the villagers assembled, the women bringing baskets of ashes and bunches of devil-expelling leaves. These leaves were then distributed to everybody, old and young. When all was ready, a band of robust men, attended by a guard of exorcists, carried one of the cars down to the sea on the right side of the village graveyard, and set it floating in the water. As soon as they had returned, another band of men carried the other car to the beach and floated it similarly in the sea to the left of the graveyard. The demon-laden barks being now launched, the women threw ashes from the shore, and the whole crowd shouted, saying, "Fly away, devil, fly away, never come again!" The wind and the tide being favourable, the canoes sailed quickly away; and that night all the people feasted together with great joy, because the devil had departed in the direction of Chowra. A similar expulsion of devils takes place once a year in other Nicobar villages; but the ceremonies are held at different times in different places.

Amongst many of the aboriginal tribes of China, a great festival is celebrated in the third month of every year. It is held by way of a general rejoicing over what the people believe to be a total annihilation of the ills of the past twelve months. The destruction is supposed to be effected in the following way. A large earthenware jar filled with gunpowder, stones, and bits of iron is buried in the earth. A train of gunpowder, communicating with the jar, is then laid; and a match being applied, the jar and its contents are blown up. The stones and bits of iron represent the ills and disasters of the past year, and the dispersion of them by the explosion is believed to remove the ills and disasters themselves. The festival is attended with much revelling and drunkenness.

At Old Calabar on the coast of Guinea, the devils and ghosts are, or used to be, publicly expelled once in two years. Among the spirits

thus driven from their haunts are the souls of all the people who died since the last lustration of the town. About three weeks or a month before the expulsion, which according to one account takes place in the month of November, rude effigies representing men and animals, such as crocodiles, leopards, elephants, bullocks, and birds, are made of wicker-work or wood, and being hung with strips of cloth and bedizened with gew-gaws, are set before the door of every house. About three o'clock in the morning of the day appointed for the ceremony the whole population turns out into the streets, and proceeds with a deafening uproar and in a state of the wildest excitement to drive all lurking devils and ghosts into the effigies, in order that they may be banished with them from the abodes of men. For this purpose bands of people roam through the streets knocking on doors, firing guns, beating drums, blowing on horns, ringing bells, clattering pots and pans, shouting and hallooing with might and main, in short making all the noise it is possible for them to raise. The hubbub goes on till the approach of dawn, when it gradually subsides and ceases altogether at sunrise. By this time the houses have been thoroughly swept, and all the frightened spirits are supposed to have huddled into the effigies or their fluttering drapery. In these wicker figures are also deposited the sweepings of the houses and the ashes of yesterday's fires. Then the demon-laden images are hastily snatched up, carried in tumultuous procession down to the brink of the river, and thrown into the water to the tuck of drums. The ebb-tide bears them away seaward, and thus the town is swept clean of ghosts and devils for another two years.

Similar annual expulsions of embodied evils are not unknown in Europe. On the evening of Easter Sunday the gypsies of Southern Europe take a wooden vessel like a band-box, which rests cradle-wise on two cross pieces of wood. In this they place herbs and simples, together with the dried carcase of a snake, or lizard, which every person present must first have touched with his fingers. The vessel is then wrapt in white and red wool, carried by the oldest man from tent to tent, and finally thrown into running water, not, however, before every member of the band has spat into it once, and the sorceress has uttered some spells over it. They believe that by performing this ceremony they dispel all the illnesses that would otherwise have afflicted them in the course of the year; and that if any one finds the vessel and opens it out of curiosity, he and his will be visited by all the maladies which the others have escaped.

The scapegoat by means of which the accumulated ills of a whole year are publicly expelled is sometimes an animal. For example, among the Garos of Assam, "besides the sacrifices for individual cases of illness, there are certain ceremonies which are observed once a year by a whole community or village, and are intended to safeguard its members from dangers of the forest, and from sickness and mishap during the coming twelve months. The principal of these is the Asongtata ceremony. Close to the outskirts of every big

village a number of stones may be noticed stuck into the ground, apparently without order or method. These are known by the name of *asong*, and on them is offered the sacrifice which the Asongtata demands. The sacrifice of a goat takes place, and a month later, that of a *langur* (*Entellus* monkey) or a bamboo-rat is considered necessary. The animal chosen has a rope fastened round its neck and is led by two men, one on each side of it, to every house in the village. It is taken inside each house in turn, the assembled villagers, meanwhile, beating the walls from the outside, to frighten and drive out any evil spirits which may have taken up their residence within. The round of the village having been made in this manner, the monkey or rat is led to the outskirts of the village, killed by a blow of a *dao*, which disembowels it, and then crucified on bamboos set up in the ground. Round the crucified animal long, sharp bamboo stakes are placed, which form *chevaux de frise* round about it. These commemorate the days when such defences surrounded the villages on all sides to keep off human enemies, and they are now a symbol to ward off sickness and dangers to life from the wild animals of the forest. The *langur* required for the purpose is hunted down some days before, but should it be found impossible to catch one, a brown monkey may take its place; a hulock may not be used." Here the crucified ape or rat is the public scapegoat, which by its vicarious sufferings and death relieves the people from all sickness and mishap in the coming year.

Again, on one day of the year the Bhotiyas of Juhar, in the Western Himalayas, take a dog, intoxicate him with spirits and bhang or hemp, and having fed him with sweetmeats, lead him round the village and let him loose. They then chase and kill him with sticks and stones, and believe that, when they have done so, no disease or misfortune will visit the village during the year. In some parts of Breadalbane it was formerly the custom on New Year's Day to take a dog to the door, give him a bit of bread, and drive him out, saying, "Get away, you dog! Whatever death of men or loss of cattle would happen in this house to the end of the present year, may it all light on your head!" On the Day of Atonement, which was the tenth day of the seventh month, the Jewish high-priest laid both his hands on the head of a live goat, confessed over it all the iniquities of the Children of Israel, and, having thereby transferred the sins of the people to the beast, sent it away into the wilderness.

The scapegoat upon whom the sins of the people are periodically laid, may also be a human being. At Onitsha, on the Niger, two human beings used to be annually sacrificed to take away the sins of the land. The victims were purchased by public subscription. All persons who, during the past year, had fallen into gross sins, such as incendiarism, theft, adultery, witchcraft, and so forth, were expected to contribute 28 *ngugas*, or a little over £2. The money thus collected was taken into the interior of the country and expended in the purchase of two sickly persons "to be offered as a sacrifice for all these abomin-

able crimes—one for the land and one for the river." A man from a neighbouring town was hired to put them to death. On the twenty-seventh of February 1858 the Rev. J. C. Taylor witnessed the sacrifice of one of these victims. The sufferer was a woman, about nineteen or twenty years of age. They dragged her alive along the ground, face downwards, from the king's house to the river, a distance of two miles, the crowds who accompanied her crying, "Wickedness! wickedness!" The intention was "to take away the iniquities of the land. The body was dragged along in a merciless manner, as if the weight of all their wickedness was thus carried away." Similar customs are said to be still secretly practised every year by many tribes in the delta of the Niger in spite of the vigilance of the British Government. Among the Yoruba negroes of West Africa "the human victim chosen for sacrifice, and who may be either a freeborn or a slave, a person of noble or wealthy parentage, or one of humble birth, is, after he has been chosen and marked out for the purpose, called an *Oluwo*. He is always well fed and nourished and supplied with whatever he should desire during the period of his confinement. When the occasion arrives for him to be sacrificed and offered up, he is commonly led about and paraded through the streets of the town or city of the Sovereign who would sacrifice him for the well-being of his government and of every family and individual under it, in order that he might carry off the sin, guilt, misfortune and death of all without exception. Ashes and chalk would be employed to hide his identity by the one being freely thrown over his head, and his face painted with the latter, whilst individuals would often rush out of their houses to lay their hands upon him that they might thus transfer to him their sin, guilt, trouble, and death." This parade over, he is taken to an inner sanctuary and beheaded. His last words or dying groans are the signal for an outburst of joy among the people assembled outside, who believe that the sacrifice has been accepted and the divine wrath appeased.

In Siam it used to be the custom on one day of the year to single out a woman broken down by debauchery, and carry her on a litter through all the streets to the music of drums and hautboys. The mob insulted her and pelted her with dirt; and after having carried her through the whole city, they threw her on a dunghill or a hedge of thorns outside the ramparts, forbidding her ever to enter the walls again. They believed that the woman thus drew upon herself all the malign influences of the air and of evil spirits. The Bataks of Sumatra offer either a red horse or a buffalo as a public sacrifice to purify the land and obtain the favour of the gods. Formerly, it is said, a man was bound to the same stake as the buffalo, and when they killed the animal, the man was driven away; no one might receive him, converse with him, or give him food. Doubtless he was supposed to carry away the sins and misfortunes of the people.

Sometimes the scapegoat is a divine animal. The people of Malabar share the Hindoo reverence for the cow, to kill and eat which

"they esteem to be a crime as heinous as homicide or wilful murder." Nevertheless the "Bramans transfer the sins of the people into one or more Cows, which are then carry'd away, both the Cows and the Sins wherewith these Beasts are charged, to what place the Braman shall appoint." When the ancient Egyptians sacrificed a bull, they invoked upon its head all the evils that might otherwise befall themselves and the land of Egypt, and thereupon they either sold the bull's head to the Greeks or cast it into the river. Now, it cannot be said that in the times known to us the Egyptians worshipped bulls in general, for they seem to have commonly killed and eaten them. But a good many circumstances point to the conclusion that originally all cattle, bulls as well as cows, were held sacred by the Egyptians. For not only were all cows esteemed holy by them and never sacrificed, but even bulls might not be sacrificed unless they had certain natural marks; a priest examined every bull before it was sacrificed; if it had the proper marks, he put his seal on the animal in token that it might be sacrificed; and if a man sacrificed a bull which had not been sealed, he was put to death. Moreover, the worship of the black bulls Apis and Mnevis, especially the former, played an important part in Egyptian religion; all bulls that died a natural death were carefully buried in the suburbs of the cities, and their bones were afterwards collected from all parts of Egypt and interred in a single spot; and at the sacrifice of a bull in the great rites of Isis all the worshippers beat their breasts and mourned. On the whole, then, we are perhaps entitled to infer that bulls were originally, as cows were always, esteemed sacred by the Egyptians, and that the slain bull upon whose head they laid the misfortunes of the people was once a divine scapegoat. It seems not improbable that the lamb annually slain by the Madis of Central Africa is a divine scapegoat, and the same supposition may partly explain the Zuni sacrifice of the turtle.

Lastly, the scapegoat may be a divine man. Thus, in November the Gonds of India worship Ghansyam Deo, the protector of the crops, and at the festival the god himself is said to descend on the head of one of the worshippers, who is suddenly seized with a kind of fit and, after staggering about, rushes off into the jungle, where it is believed that, if left to himself, he would die mad. However, they bring him back, but he does not recover his senses for one or two days. The people think that one man is thus singled out as a scapegoat for the sins of the rest of the village. In the temple of the Moon the Albanians of the Eastern Caucasus kept a number of sacred slaves, of whom many were inspired and prophesied. When one of these men exhibited more than usual symptoms of inspiration or insanity, and wandered solitary up and down the woods, like the Gond in the jungle, the high priest had him bound with a sacred chain and maintained him in luxury for a year. At the end of the year he was anointed with unguents and led forth to be sacrificed. A man whose business it was to slay these human victims and to whom practice had given dexterity, advanced from the crowd and thrust a sacred spear into

the victim's side, piercing his heart. From the manner in which the slain man fell, omens were drawn as to the welfare of the commonwealth. Then the body was carried to a certain spot where all the people stood upon it as a purificatory ceremony. This last circumstance clearly indicates that the sins of the people were transferred to the victim, just as the Jewish priest transferred the sins of the people to the scapegoat by laying his hands on the animal's head; and since the man was believed to be possessed by the divine spirit, we have here an undoubted example of a man-god slain to take away the sins and misfortunes of the people.

In Tibet the ceremony of the scapegoat presents some remarkable features. The Tibetan new year begins with the new moon which appears about the fifteenth of February. For twenty-three days afterwards the government of Lhasa, the capital, is taken out of the hands of the ordinary rulers and entrusted to the monk of the Debang monastery who offers to pay the highest sum for the privilege. The successful bidder is called the Jalno, and he announces his accession to power in person, going through the streets of Lhasa with a silver stick in his hand. Monks from all the neighbouring monasteries and temples assemble to pay him homage. The Jalno exercises his authority in the most arbitrary manner for his own benefit, as all the fines which he exacts are his by purchase. The profit he makes is about ten times the amount of the purchase money. His men go about the streets in order to discover any conduct on the part of the inhabitants that can be found fault with. Every house in Lhasa is taxed at this time, and the slightest offence is punished with unsparing rigour by fines. This severity of the Jalno drives all working classes out of the city till the twenty-three days are over. But if the laity go out, the clergy come in. All the Buddhist monasteries of the country for miles round about open their gates and disgorge their inmates. All the roads that lead down into Lhasa from the neighbouring mountains are full of monks hurrying to the capital, some on foot, some on horseback, some riding asses or lowing oxen, all carrying their prayer-books and culinary utensils. In such multitudes do they come that the streets and squares of the city are encumbered with their swarms, and incarnadined with their red cloaks. The disorder and confusion are indescribable. Bands of the holy men traverse the streets chanting prayers, or uttering wild cries. They meet, they jostle, they quarrel, they fight; bloody noses, black eyes, and broken heads are freely given and received. All day long, too, from before the peep of dawn till after darkness has fallen, these red-cloaked monks hold services in the dim incense-laden air of the great Machindranath temple, the cathedral of Lhasa; and thither they crowd thrice a day to receive their doles of tea and soup and money. The cathedral is a vast building, standing in the centre of the city, and surrounded by bazaars and shops. The idols in it are richly inlaid with gold and precious stones.

Twenty-four days after the Jalno has ceased to have authority,

he assumes it again, and for ten days acts in the same arbitrary manner as before. On the first of the ten days the priests again assemble at the cathedral, pray to the gods to prevent sickness and other evils among the people, "and, as a peace-offering, sacrifice one man. The man is not killed purposely, but the ceremony he undergoes often proves fatal. Grain is thrown against his head, and his face is painted half white, half black." Thus grotesquely disguised, and carrying a coat of skin on his arm, he is called the King of the Years, and sits daily in the market-place, where he helps himself to whatever he likes and goes about shaking a black yak's tail over the people, who thus transfer their bad luck to him. On the tenth day, all the troops in Lhasa march to the great temple and form in line before it. The King of the Years is brought forth from the temple and receives small donations from the assembled multitude. He then ridicules the Jalno, saying to him, "What we perceive through the five senses is no illusion. All you teach is untrue," and the like. The Jalno, who represents the Grand Lama for the time being, contests these heretical opinions; the dispute waxes warm, and at last both agree to decide the questions at issue by a cast of the dice, the Jalno offering to change places with the scapegoat should the throw be against him. If the King of the Years wins, much evil is prognosticated; but if the Jalno wins, there is great rejoicing, for it proves that his adversary has been accepted by the gods as a victim to bear all the sins of the people of Lhasa. Fortune, however, always favours the Jalno, who throws sixes with unvarying success, while his opponent turns up only ones. Nor is this so extraordinary as at first sight it might appear; for the Jalno's dice are marked with nothing but sixes and his adversary's with nothing but ones. When he sees the finger of Providence thus plainly pointed against him, the King of the Years is terrified and flees away upon a white horse, with a white dog, a white bird, salt, and so forth, which have all been provided for him by the government. His face is still painted half white and half black, and he still wears his leathern coat. The whole populace pursues him, hooting, yelling, and firing blank shots in volleys after him. Thus driven out of the city, he is detained for seven days in the great chamber of horrors at the Samyas monastery, surrounded by monstrous and terrific images of devils and skins of huge serpents and wild beasts. Thence he goes away into the mountains of Chetang, where he has to remain an outcast for several months or a year in a narrow den. If he dies before the time is out, the people say it is an auspicious omen; but if he survives, he may return to Lhasa and play the part of scapegoat over again the following year.

This quaint ceremonial, still annually observed in the secluded capital of Buddhism—the Rome of Asia—is interesting because it exhibits, in a clearly marked religious stratification, a series of divine redeemers themselves redeemed, of vicarious sacrifices vicariously atoned for, of gods undergoing a process of fossilisation, who, while they retain the privileges, have disburdened themselves of the pains and penalties of divinity. In the Jalno we may without undue

straining discern a successor of those temporary kings, those mortal gods, who purchase a short lease of power and glory at the price of their lives. That he is the temporary substitute of the Grand Lama is certain; that he is, or was once, liable to act as scapegoat for the people is made nearly certain by his offer to change places with the real scapegoat—the King of the Years—if the arbitrament of the dice should go against him. It is true that the conditions under which the question is now put to the hazard have reduced the offer to an idle form. But such forms are no mere mushroom growths, springing up of themselves in a night. If they are now lifeless formalities, empty husks devoid of significance, we may be sure that they once had a life and a meaning; if at the present day they are blind alleys leading nowhere, we may be certain that in former days they were paths that led somewhere, if only to death. That death was the goal to which of old the Tibetan scapegoat passed after his brief period of licence in the market-place, is a conjecture that has much to commend it. Analogy suggests it; the blank shots fired after him, the statement that the ceremony often proves fatal, the belief that his death is a happy omen, all confirm it. We need not wonder then that the Jalno, after paying so dear to act as deputy-deity for a few weeks, should have preferred to die by deputy rather than in his own person when his time was up. The painful but necessary duty was accordingly laid on some poor devil, some social outcast, some wretch with whom the world had gone hard, who readily agreed to throw away his life at the end of a few days if only he might have his fling in the meantime. For observe that while the time allowed to the original deputy—the Jalno—was measured by weeks, the time allowed to the deputy's deputy was cut down to days, ten days according to one authority, seven days according to another. So short a rope was doubtless thought a long enough tether for so black or sickly a sheep; so few sands in the hour-glass, slipping so fast away, sufficed for one who had wasted so many precious years. Hence in the jack-pudding who now masquerades with motley countenance in the market-place of Lhasa, sweeping up misfortune with a black yak's tail, we may fairly see the substitute of a substitute, the vicar of a vicar, the proxy on whose back the heavy burden was laid when it had been lifted from nobler shoulders. But the clue, if we have followed it aright, does not stop at the Jalno; it leads straight back to the pope of Lhasa himself, the Grand Lama, of whom the Jalno is merely the temporary vicar. The analogy of many customs in many lands points to the conclusion that, if this human divinity stoops to resign his ghostly power for a time into the hands of a substitute, it is, or rather was once, for no other reason than that the substitute might die in his stead. Thus through the mist of ages unillumined by the lamp of history, the tragic figure of the pope of Buddhism—God's vicar on earth for Asia—looms dim and sad as the man-god who bore his people's sorrows, the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep.

§ 4. *On Scapegoats in General.*—The foregoing survey of the custom

of publicly expelling the accumulated evils of a village or town or country suggests a few general observations.

In the first place, it will not be disputed that what I have called the immediate and the mediate expulsions of evil are identical in intention; in other words, that whether the evils are conceived of as invisible or as embodied in a material form, is a circumstance entirely subordinate to the main object of the ceremony, which is simply to effect a total clearance of all the ills that have been infesting a people. If any link were wanting to connect the two kinds of expulsion, it would be furnished by such a practice as that of sending the evils away in a litter or a boat. For here, on the one hand, the evils are invisible and intangible; and, on the other hand, there is a visible and tangible vehicle to convey them away. And a scapegoat is nothing more than such a vehicle.

In the second place, when a general clearance of evils is resorted to periodically, the interval between the celebrations of the ceremony is commonly a year, and the time of year when the ceremony takes place usually coincides with some well-marked change of season, such as the beginning or end of winter in the arctic and temperate zones, and the beginning or end of the rainy season in the tropics. The increased mortality which such climatic changes are apt to produce, especially amongst ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-housed savages, is set down by primitive man to the agency of demons, who must accordingly be expelled. Hence, in the tropical regions of New Britain and Peru, the devils are or were driven out at the beginning of the rainy season; hence, on the dreary coasts of Baffin Land, they are banished at the approach of the bitter Arctic winter. When a tribe has taken to husbandry, the time for the general expulsion of devils is naturally made to agree with one of the great epochs of the agricultural year, as sowing, or harvest; but, as these epochs themselves naturally coincide with changes of season, it does not follow that the transition from the hunting or pastoral to the agricultural life involves any alteration in the time of celebrating this great annual rite. Some of the agricultural communities of India and the Hindoo Koosh, as we have seen, hold their general clearance of demons at harvest, others at sowing-time. But, at whatever season of the year it is held, the general expulsion of devils commonly marks the beginning of the new year. For, before entering on a new year, people are anxious to rid themselves of the troubles that have harassed them in the past; hence it comes about that in so many communities the beginning of the new year is inaugurated with a solemn and public banishment of evil spirits.

In the third place, it is to be observed that this public and periodic expulsion of devils is commonly preceded or followed by a period of general license, during which the ordinary restraints of society are thrown aside, and all offences, short of the gravest, are allowed to pass unpunished. In Guinea and Tonquin the period of license precedes the public expulsion of demons; and the suspension of the

ordinary government in Lhasa previous to the expulsion of the scapegoat is perhaps a relic of a similar period of universal license. Amongst the Hos of India the period of license follows the expulsion of the devil. Amongst the Iroquois it hardly appears whether it preceded or followed the banishment of evils. In any case, the extraordinary relaxation of all ordinary rules of conduct on such occasions is doubtless to be explained by the general clearance of evils which precedes or follows it. On the one hand, when a general riddance of evil and absolution from all sin is in immediate prospect, men are encouraged to give the rein to their passions, trusting that the coming ceremony will wipe out the score which they are running up so fast. On the other hand, when the ceremony has just taken place, men's minds are freed from the oppressive sense, under which they generally labour, of an atmosphere surcharged with devils; and in the first revulsion of joy they overleap the limits commonly imposed by custom and morality. When the ceremony takes place at harvest-time, the elation of feeling which it excites is further stimulated by the state of physical wellbeing produced by an abundant supply of food.

Fourthly, the employment of a divine man or animal as a scapegoat is especially to be noted; indeed, we are here directly concerned with the custom of banishing evils only in so far as these evils are believed to be transferred to a god who is afterwards slain. It may be suspected that the custom of employing a divine man or animal as a public scapegoat is much more widely diffused than appears from the examples cited. For, as has already been pointed out, the custom of killing a god dates from so early a period of human history that in later ages, even when the custom continues to be practised, it is liable to be misinterpreted. The divine character of the animal or man is forgotten, and he comes to be regarded merely as an ordinary victim. This is especially likely to be the case when it is a divine man who is killed. For when a nation becomes civilised, if it does not drop human sacrifices altogether, it at least selects as victims only such wretches as would be put to death at any rate. Thus the killing of a god may sometimes come to be confounded with the execution of a criminal.

If we ask why a dying god should be chosen to take upon himself and carry away the sins and sorrows of the people, it may be suggested that in the practice of using the divinity as a scapegoat we have a combination of two customs which were at one time distinct and independent. On the one hand we have seen that it has been customary to kill the human or animal god in order to save his divine life from being weakened by the inroads of age. On the other hand we have seen that it has been customary to have a general expulsion of evils and sins once a year. Now, if it occurred to people to combine these two customs, the result would be the employment of the dying god as a scapegoat. He was killed, not originally to take away sin, but to save the divine life from the degeneracy of old age; but, since he had to be killed at any rate, people may have thought that they might as well seize the opportunity to lay upon him the burden of their sufferings

and sins, in order that he might bear it away with him to the unknown world beyond the grave.

The use of the divinity as a scapegoat clears up the ambiguity which, as we saw, appears to hang about the European folk-custom of "carrying out Death." Grounds have been shown for believing that in this ceremony the so-called Death was originally the spirit of vegetation, who was annually slain in spring, in order that he might come to life again with all the vigour of youth. But, as I pointed out, there are certain features in the ceremony which are not explicable on this hypothesis alone. Such are the marks of joy with which the effigy of Death is carried out to be buried or burnt, and the fear and abhorrence of it manifested by the bearers. But these features become at once intelligible if we suppose that the Death was not merely the dying god of vegetation, but also a public scapegoat, upon whom were laid all the evils that had afflicted the people during the past year. Joy on such an occasion is natural and appropriate; and if the dying god appears to be the object of that fear and abhorrence which are properly due not to himself, but to the sins and misfortunes with which he is laden, this arises merely from the difficulty of distinguishing, or at least of marking the distinction, between the bearer and the burden. When the burden is of a baleful character, the bearer of it will be feared and shunned just as much as if he were himself instinct with those dangerous properties of which, as it happens, he is only the vehicle. Similarly we have seen that disease-laden and sin-laden boats are dreaded and shunned by East Indian peoples. Again, the view that in these popular customs the Death is a scapegoat as well as a representative of the divine spirit of vegetation derives some support from the circumstance that its expulsion is always celebrated in spring and chiefly by Slavonic peoples. For the Slavonic year began in spring; and thus, in one of its aspects, the ceremony of "carrying out Death" would be an example of the widespread custom of expelling the accumulated evils of the old year before entering on a new one.

CHAPTER LVIII

HUMAN SCAPEGOATS IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

§ 1. *The Human Scapegoat in Ancient Rome.*—We are now prepared to notice the use of the human scapegoat in classical antiquity. Every year on the fourteenth of March a man clad in skins was led in procession through the streets of Rome, beaten with long white rods, and driven out of the city. He was called Mamurius Veturius, that is, "the old Mars," and as the ceremony took place on the day preceding the first full moon of the old Roman year (which began on the first of March), the skin-clad man must have represented the Mars of the past year, who was driven out at the beginning of a new one. Now Mars was

originally not a god of war but of vegetation. For it was to Mars that the Roman husbandman prayed for the prosperity of his corn and his vines, his fruit-trees and his copses; it was to Mars that the priestly college of the Arval Brothers, whose business it was to sacrifice for the growth of the crops, addressed their petitions almost exclusively; and it was to Mars, as we saw, that a horse was sacrificed in October to secure an abundant harvest. Moreover, it was to Mars, under his title of "Mars of the woods" (*Mars Silvanus*), that farmers offered sacrifice for the welfare of their cattle. We have already seen that cattle are commonly supposed to be under the special patronage of tree-gods. Once more, the consecration of the vernal month of March to Mars seems to point him out as the deity of the sprouting vegetation. Thus the Roman custom of expelling the old Mars at the beginning of the new year in spring is identical with the Slavonic custom of "carrying out Death," if the view here taken of the latter custom is correct. The similarity of the Roman and Slavonic customs has been already remarked by scholars, who appear, however, to have taken Mamurius Veturius and the corresponding figures in the Slavonic ceremonies to be representatives of the old year rather than of the old god of vegetation. It is possible that ceremonies of this kind may have come to be thus interpreted in later times even by the people who practised them. But the personification of a period of time is too abstract an idea to be primitive. However, in the Roman, as in the Slavonic, ceremony, the representative of the god appears to have been treated not only as a deity of vegetation but also as a scapegoat. His expulsion implies this; for there is no reason why the god of vegetation, as such, should be expelled the city. But it is otherwise if he is also a scapegoat; it then becomes necessary to drive him beyond the boundaries, that he may carry his sorrowful burden away to other lands. And, in fact, Mamurius Veturius appears to have been driven away to the land of the Oscans, the enemies of Rome.

§ 2. *The Human Scapegoat in Ancient Greece.*—The ancient Greeks were also familiar with the use of a human scapegoat. In Plutarch's native town of Chaeronea a ceremony of this kind was performed by the chief magistrate at the Town Hall, and by each householder at his own home. It was called the "expulsion of hunger." A slave was beaten with rods of the *agnus castus,* and turned out of doors with the words, "Out with hunger, and in with wealth and health." When Plutarch held the office of chief magistrate of his native town he performed this ceremony at the Town Hall, and he has recorded the discussion to which the custom afterwards gave rise.

But in civilised Greece the custom of the scapegoat took darker forms than the innocent rite over which the amiable and pious Plutarch presided. Whenever Marseilles, one of the busiest and most brilliant of Greek colonies, was ravaged by a plague, a man of the poorer classes used to offer himself as a scapegoat. For a whole year he was maintained at the public expense, being fed on choice and pure food. At the expiry of the year he was dressed in sacred garments, decked with

holy branches, and led through the whole city, while prayers were uttered that all the evils of the people might fall on his head. He was then cast out of the city or stoned to death by the people outside of the walls. The Athenians regularly maintained a number of degraded and useless beings at the public expense; and when any calamity, such as plague, drought, or famine, befell the city, they sacrificed two of these outcast scapegoats. One of the victims was sacrificed for the men and the other for the women. The former wore round his neck a string of black, the latter a string of white figs. Sometimes, it seems, the victim slain on behalf of the women was a woman. They were led about the city and then sacrificed, apparently by being stoned to death outside the city. But such sacrifices were not confined to extraordinary occasions of public calamity; it appears that every year, at the festival of the Thargelia in May, two victims, one for the men and one for the women, were led out of Athens and stoned to death. The city of Abdera in Thrace was publicly purified once a year, and one of the burghers, set apart for the purpose, was stoned to death as a scapegoat or vicarious sacrifice for the life of all the others; six days before his execution he was excommunicated, "in order that he alone might bear the sins of all the people."

From the Lover's Leap, a white bluff at the southern end of their island, the Leucadians used annually to hurl a criminal into the sea as a scapegoat. But to lighten his fall they fastened live birds and feathers to him, and a flotilla of small boats waited below to catch him and convey him beyond the boundary. Probably these humane precautions were a mitigation of an earlier custom of flinging the scapegoat into the sea to drown. The Leucadian ceremony took place at the time of a sacrifice to Apollo, who had a temple or sanctuary on the spot. Elsewhere it was customary to cast a young man every year into the sea, with the prayer, "Be thou our offscouring." This ceremony was supposed to rid the people of the evils by which they were beset, or according to a somewhat different interpretation it redeemed them by paying the debt they owed to the sea-god. As practised by the Greeks of Asia Minor in the sixth century before our era, the custom of the scapegoat was as follows. When a city suffered from plague, famine, or other public calamity, an ugly or deformed person was chosen to take upon himself all the evils which afflicted the community. He was brought to a suitable place, where dried figs, a barley loaf, and cheese were put into his hand. These he ate. Then he was beaten seven times upon his genital organs with squills and branches of the wild fig and other wild trees, while the flutes played a particular tune. Afterwards he was burned on a pyre built of the wood of forest trees; and his ashes were cast into the sea. A similar custom appears to have been annually celebrated by the Asiatic Greeks at the harvest festival of the Thargelia.

In the ritual just described the scourging of the victim with squills, branches of the wild fig, and so forth, cannot have been intended to aggravate his sufferings, otherwise any stick would have been good

enough to beat him with. The true meaning of this part of the ceremony has been explained by W. Mannhardt. He points out that the ancients attributed to squills a magical power of averting evil influences, and that accordingly they hung them up at the doors of their houses and made use of them in purificatory rites. Hence the Arcadian custom of whipping the image of Pan with squills at a festival, or whenever the hunters returned empty-handed, must have been meant, not to punish the god, but to purify him from the harmful influences which were impeding him in the exercise of his divine functions as a god who should supply the hunter with game. Similarly the object of beating the human scapegoat on the genital organs with squills and so on, must have been to release his reproductive energies from any restraint or spell under which they might be laid by demoniacal or other malignant agency; and as the Thargelia at which he was annually sacrificed was an early harvest festival celebrated in May, we must recognise in him a representative of the creative and fertilising god of vegetation. The representative of the god was annually slain for the purpose I have indicated, that of maintaining the divine life in perpetual vigour, untainted by the weakness of age; and before he was put to death it was not unnatural to stimulate his reproductive powers in order that these might be transmitted in full activity to his successor, the new god or new embodiment of the old god, who was doubtless supposed immediately to take the place of the one slain. Similar reasoning would lead to a similar treatment of the scapegoat on special occasions, such as drought or famine. If the crops did not answer to the expectation of the husbandman, this would be attributed to some failure in the generative powers of the god whose function it was to produce the fruits of the earth. It might be thought that he was under a spell or was growing old and feeble. Accordingly he was slain in the person of his representative, with all the ceremonies already described, in order that, born young again, he might infuse his own youthful vigour into the stagnant energies of nature. On the same principle we can understand why Mamurius Veturius was beaten with rods, why the slave at the Chaeronean ceremony was beaten with the *agnus castus* (a tree to which magical properties were ascribed), why the effigy of Death in some parts of Europe is assailed with sticks and stones, and why at Babylon the criminal who played the god was scourged before he was crucified. The purpose of the scourging was not to intensify the agony of the divine sufferer, but on the contrary to dispel any malignant influences by which at the supreme moment he might conceivably be beset.

Thus far I have assumed that the human victims at the Thargelia represented the spirits of vegetation in general, but it has been well remarked by Mr. W. R. Paton that these poor wretches seem to have masqueraded as the spirits of fig-trees in particular. He points out that the process of caprification, as it is called, that is, the artificial fertilisation of the cultivated fig-trees by hanging strings of wild figs among the boughs, takes place in Greece and Asia Minor in June about

a month after the date of the Thargelia, and he suggests that the hanging of the black and white figs round the necks of the two human victims, one of whom represented the men and the other the women, may have been a direct imitation of the process of caprification designed, on the principle of imitative magic, to assist the fertilisation of the fig-trees. And since caprification is in fact a marriage of the male fig-tree with the female fig-tree, Mr. Paton further supposes that the loves of the trees may, on the same principle of imitative magic, have been simulated by a mock or even a real marriage between the two human victims, one of whom appears sometimes to have been a woman. On this view the practice of beating the human victims on their genitals with branches of wild fig-trees and with squills was a charm intended to stimulate the generative powers of the man and woman who for the time being personated the male and the female fig-trees respectively, and who by their union in marriage, whether real or pretended, were believed to help the trees to bear fruit.

The interpretation which I have adopted of the custom of beating the human scapegoat with certain plants is supported by many analogies. Thus among the Kai of German New Guinea, when a man wishes to make his banana shoots bear fruit quickly, he beats them with a stick cut from a banana-tree which has already borne fruit. Here it is obvious that fruitfulness is believed to inhere in a stick cut from a fruitful tree and to be imparted by contact to the young banana plants. Similarly in New Caledonia a man will beat his taro plants lightly with a branch, saying as he does so, "I beat this taro that it may grow," after which he plants the branch in the ground at the end of the field. Among the Indians of Brazil at the mouth of the Amazon, when a man wishes to increase the size of his generative organ, he strikes it with the fruit of a white aquatic plant called *aninga*, which grows luxuriantly on the banks of the river. The fruit, which is inedible, resembles a banana, and is clearly chosen for this purpose on account of its shape. The ceremony should be performed three days before or after the new moon. In the county of Bekes, in Hungary, barren women are fertilised by being struck with a stick which has first been used to separate pairing dogs. Here a fertilising virtue is clearly supposed to be inherent in the stick and to be conveyed by contact to the women. The Toradjas of Central Celebes think that the plant *Dracaena terminalis* has a strong soul, because when it is lopped, it soon grows up again. Hence when a man is ill, his friends will sometimes beat him on the crown of the head with *Dracaena* leaves in order to strengthen his weak soul with the strong soul of the plant.

These analogies, accordingly, support the interpretation which, following my predecessors W. Mannhardt and Mr. W. R. Paton, I have given of the beating inflicted on the human victims at the Greek harvest festival of the Thargelia. That beating, being administered to the generative organs of the victims by fresh green plants and branches, is most naturally explained as a charm to increase the

reproductive energies of the men or women either by communicating to them the fruitfulness of the plants and branches, or by ridding them of the maleficent influences; and this interpretation is confirmed by the observation that the two victims represented the two sexes, one of them standing for the men in general and the other for the women. The season of the year when the ceremony was performed, namely the time of the corn harvest, tallies well with the theory that the rite had an agricultural significance. Further, that it was above all intended to fertilise the fig-trees is strongly suggested by the strings of black and white figs which were hung round the necks of the victims, as well as by the blows which were given their genital organs with the branches of a wild fig-tree; since this procedure closely resembles the procedure which ancient and modern husbandmen in Greek lands have regularly resorted to for the purpose of actually fertilising their fig-trees. When we remember what an important part the artificial fertilisation of the date palm-tree appears to have played of old not only in the husbandry but in the religion of Mesopotamia, there seems no reason to doubt that the artificial fertilisation of the fig-tree may in like manner have vindicated for itself a place in the solemn ritual of Greek religion.

If these considerations are just, we must apparently conclude that while the human victims at the Thargelia certainly appear in later classical times to have figured chiefly as public scapegoats, who carried away with them the sins, misfortunes, and sorrows of the whole people, at an earlier time they may have been looked on as embodiments of vegetation, perhaps of the corn but particularly of the fig-trees; and that the beating which they received and the death which they died were intended primarily to brace and refresh the powers of vegetation then beginning to droop and languish under the torrid heat of the Greek summer.

The view here taken of the Greek scapegoat, if it is correct, obviates an objection which might otherwise be brought against the main argument of this book. To the theory that the priest of Aricia was slain as a representative of the spirit of the grove, it might have been objected that such a custom has no analogy in classical antiquity. But reasons have now been given for believing that the human being periodically and occasionally slain by the Asiatic Greeks was regularly treated as an embodiment of a divinity of vegetation. Probably the persons whom the Athenians kept to be sacrificed were similarly treated as divine. That they were social outcasts did not matter. On the primitive view a man is not chosen to be the mouth-piece or embodiment of a god on account of his high moral qualities or social rank. The divine afflatus descends equally on the good and the bad, the lofty and the lowly. If then the civilised Greeks of Asia and Athens habitually sacrificed men whom they regarded as incarnate gods, there can be no inherent improbability in the supposition that at the dawn of history a similar custom was observed by the semi-barbarous Latins in the Arician Grove.

But to clinch the argument, it is clearly desirable to prove that the custom of putting to death a human representative of a god was known and practised in ancient Italy elsewhere than in the Arician Grove. This proof I now propose to adduce.

§ 3. *The Roman Saturnalia.*—We have seen that many peoples have been used to observe an annual period of license, when the customary restraints of law and morality are thrown aside, when the whole population give themselves up to extravagant mirth and jollity, and when the darker passions find a vent which would never be allowed them in the more staid and sober course of ordinary life. Such outbursts of the pent-up forces of human nature, too often degenerating into wild orgies of lust and crime, occur most commonly at the end of the year, and are frequently associated, as I have had occasion to point out, with one or other of the agricultural seasons, especially with the time of sowing or of harvest. Now, of all these periods of license the one which is best known and which in modern language has given its name to the rest, is the Saturnalia. This famous festival fell in December, the last month of the Roman year, and was popularly supposed to commemorate the merry reign of Saturn, the god of sowing and of husbandry, who lived on earth long ago as a righteous and beneficent king of Italy, drew the rude and scattered dwellers on the mountains together, taught them to till the ground, gave them laws, and ruled in peace. His reign was the fabled Golden Age: the earth brought forth abundantly: no sound of war or discord troubled the happy world: no baleful love of lucre worked like poison in the blood of the industrious and contented peasantry. Slavery and private property were alike unknown: all men had all things in common. At last the good god, the kindly king, vanished suddenly; but his memory was cherished to distant ages, shrines were reared in his honour, and many hills and high places in Italy bore his name. Yet the bright tradition of his reign was crossed by a dark shadow: his altars are said to have been stained with the blood of human victims, for whom a more merciful age afterwards substituted effigies. Of this gloomy side of the god's religion there is little or no trace in the descriptions which ancient writers have left us of the Saturnalia. Feasting and revelry and all the mad pursuit of pleasure are the features that seem to have especially marked this carnival of antiquity, as it went on for seven days in the streets and public squares and houses of ancient Rome from the seventeenth to the twenty-third of December.

But no feature of the festival is more remarkable, nothing in it seems to have struck the ancients themselves more than the license granted to slaves at this time. The distinction between the free and the servile classes was temporarily abolished. The slave might rail at his master, intoxicate himself like his betters, sit down at table with them, and not even a word of reproof would be administered to him for conduct which at any other season might have been punished with stripes, imprisonment, or death. Nay, more, masters actually

changed places with their slaves and waited on them at table; and not till the serf had done eating and drinking was the board cleared and dinner set for his master. So far was this inversion of ranks carried, that each household became for a time a mimic republic in which the high offices of state were discharged by the slaves, who gave their orders and laid down the law as if they were indeed invested with all the dignity of the consulship, the praetorship, and the bench. Like the pale reflection of power thus accorded to bondsmen at the Saturnalia was the mock kingship for which freemen cast lots at the same season. The person on whom the lot fell enjoyed the title of king, and issued commands of a playful and ludicrous nature to his temporary subjects. One of them he might order to mix the wine, another to drink, another to sing, another to dance, another to speak in his own dispraise, another to carry a flute-girl on his back round the house.

Now, when we remember that the liberty allowed to slaves at this festive season was supposed to be an imitation of the state of society in Saturn's time, and that in general the Saturnalia passed for nothing more or less than a temporary revival or restoration of the reign of that merry monarch, we are tempted to surmise that the mock king who presided over the revels may have originally represented Saturn himself. The conjecture is strongly confirmed, if not established, by a very curious and interesting account of the way in which the Saturnalia was celebrated by the Roman soldiers stationed on the Danube in the reign of Maximian and Diocletian. The account is preserved in a narrative of the martyrdom of St. Dasius, which was unearthed from a Greek manuscript in the Paris library, and published by Professor Franz Cumont of Ghent. Two briefer descriptions of the event and of the custom are contained in manuscripts at Milan and Berlin; one of them had already seen the light in an obscure volume printed at Urbino in 1727, but its importance for the history of the Roman religion, both ancient and modern, appears to have been overlooked until Professor Cumont drew the attention of scholars to all three narratives by publishing them together some years ago. According to these narratives, which have all the appearance of being authentic, and of which the longest is probably based on official documents, the Roman soldiers at Durostorum in Lower Moesia celebrated the Saturnalia year by year in the following manner. Thirty days before the festival they chose by lot from amongst themselves a young and handsome man, who was then clothed in royal attire to resemble Saturn. Thus arrayed and attended by a multitude of soldiers he went about in public with full license to indulge his passions and to taste of every pleasure, however base and shameful. But if his reign was merry, it was short and ended tragically; for when the thirty days were up and the festival of Saturn had come, he cut his own throat on the altar of the god whom he personated. In the year A.D. 303 the lot fell upon the Christian soldier Dasius, but he refused to play the part of the heathen god

and soil his last days by debauchery. The threats and arguments of his commanding officer Bassus failed to shake his constancy, and accordingly he was beheaded, as the Christian martyrologist records with minute accuracy, at Durostorum by the soldier John on Friday the twentieth day of November, being the twenty-fourth day of the moon, at the fourth hour.

Since this narrative was published by Professor Cumont, its historical character, which had been doubted or denied, has received strong confirmation from an interesting discovery. In the crypt of the cathedral which crowns the promontory of Ancona there is preserved, among other remarkable antiquities, a white marble sarcophagus bearing a Greek inscription, in characters of the age of Justinian, to the following effect: "Here lies the holy martyr Dasius, brought from Durostorum." The sarcophagus was transferred to the crypt of the cathedral in 1848 from the church of San Pellegrino, under the high altar of which, as we learn from a Latin inscription let into the masonry, the martyr's bones still repose with those of two other saints. How long the sarcophagus was deposited in the church of San Pellegrino, we do not know; but it is recorded to have been there in the year 1650. We may suppose that the saint's relics were transferred for safety to Ancona at some time in the troubled centuries which followed his martyrdom, when Moesia was occupied and ravaged by successive hordes of barbarian invaders. At all events it appears certain from the independent and mutually confirmatory evidence of the martyrology and the monuments that Dasius was no mythical saint, but a real man, who suffered death for his faith at Durostorum in one of the early centuries of the Christian era. Finding the narrative of the nameless martyrologist thus established as to the principal fact recorded, namely, the martyrdom of St. Dasius, we may reasonably accept his testimony as to the manner and cause of the martyrdom, all the more because his narrative is precise, circumstantial, and entirely free from the miraculous element. Accordingly I conclude that the account which he gives of the celebration of the Saturnalia among the Roman soldiers is trustworthy.

This account sets in a new and lurid light the office of the King of the Saturnalia, the ancient Lord of Misrule, who presided over the winter revels at Rome in the time of Horace and Tacitus. It seems to prove that his business had not always been that of a mere harlequin or merry-andrew whose only care was that the revelry should run high and the fun grow fast and furious, while the fire blazed and crackled on the hearth, while the streets swarmed with festive crowds, and through the clear frosty air, far away to the north, Soracte showed his coronal of snow. When we compare this comic monarch of the gay, the civilised metropolis with his grim counterpart of the rude camp on the Danube, and when we remember the long array of similar figures, ludicrous yet tragic, who in other ages and in other lands, wearing mock crowns and wrapped in sceptred palls, have played their little pranks for a few brief hours or days, then passed before their

time to a violent death, we can hardly doubt that in the King of the Saturnalia at Rome, as he is depicted by classical writers, we see only a feeble emasculated copy of that original, whose strong features have been fortunately preserved for us by the obscure author of the *Martyrdom of St. Dasius*. In other words, the martyrologist's account of the Saturnalia agrees so closely with the accounts of similar rites elsewhere which could not possibly have been known to him, that the substantial accuracy of his description may be regarded as established; and further, since the custom of putting a mock king to death as a representative of a god cannot have grown out of a practice of appointing him to preside over a holiday revel, whereas the reverse may very well have happened, we are justified in assuming that in an earlier and more barbarous age it was the universal practice in ancient Italy, wherever the worship of Saturn prevailed, to choose a man who played the part and enjoyed all the traditionary privileges of Saturn for a season, and then died, whether by his own or another's hand, whether by the knife or the fire or on the gallows-tree, in the character of the good god who gave his life for the world. In Rome itself and other great towns the growth of civilisation had probably mitigated this cruel custom long before the Augustan age, and transformed it into the innocent shape it wears in the writings of the few classical writers who bestow a passing notice on the holiday King of the Saturnalia. But in remoter districts the older and sterner practice may long have survived; and even if after the unification of Italy the barbarous usage was suppressed by the Roman government, the memory of it would be handed down by the peasants and would tend from time to time, as still happens with the lowest forms of superstition among ourselves, to lead to a recrudescence of the practice, especially among the rude soldiery on the outskirts of the empire over whom the once iron hand of Rome was beginning to relax its grasp.

The resemblance between the Saturnalia of ancient and the Carnival of modern Italy has often been remarked; but in the light of all the facts that have come before us, we may well ask whether the resemblance does not amount to identity. We have seen that in Italy, Spain, and France, that is, in the countries where the influence of Rome has been deepest and most lasting, a conspicuous feature of the Carnival is a burlesque figure personifying the festive season, which after a short career of glory and dissipation is publicly shot, burnt, or otherwise destroyed, to the feigned grief or genuine delight of the populace. If the view here suggested of the Carnival is correct, this grotesque personage is no other than a direct successor of the old King of the Saturnalia, the master of the revels, the real man who personated Saturn and, when the revels were over, suffered a real death in his assumed character. The King of the Bean on Twelfth Night and the mediaeval Bishop of Fools, Abbot of Unreason, or Lord of Misrule are figures of the same sort and may perhaps have had a similar origin. Whether that was so or not, we may conclude with a fair degree of probability that if the King of the Wood at Aricia lived and died as

an incarnation of a sylvan deity, he had of old a parallel at Rome in the men who, year by year, were slain in the character of King Saturn, the god of the sown and sprouting seed.

CHAPTER LIX

KILLING THE GOD IN MEXICO

By no people does the custom of sacrificing the human representative of a god appear to have been observed so commonly and with so much solemnity as by the Aztecs of ancient Mexico. With the ritual of these remarkable sacrifices we are well acquainted, for it has been fully described by the Spaniards who conquered Mexico in the sixteenth century, and whose curiosity was naturally excited by the discovery in this distant region of a barbarous and cruel religion which presented many curious points of analogy to the doctrine and ritual of their own church. "They took a captive," says the Jesuit Acosta, "such as they thought good; and afore they did sacrifice him unto their idols, they gave him the name of the idol, to whom he should be sacrificed, and apparelled him with the same ornaments like their idol, saying, that he did represent the same idol. And during the time that this representation lasted, which was for a year in some feasts, in others six months, and in others less, they reverenced and worshipped him in the same manner as the proper idol; and in the meantime he did eat, drink, and was merry. When he went through the streets, the people came forth to worship him, and every one brought him an alms, with children and sick folks, that he might cure them, and bless them, suffering him to do all things at his pleasure, only he was accompanied with ten or twelve men lest he should fly. And he (to the end he might be reverenced as he passed) sometimes sounded upon a small flute, that the people might prepare to worship him. The feast being come, and he grown fat, they killed him, opened him, and ate him, making a solemn sacrifice of him."

This general description of the custom may now be illustrated by particular examples. Thus at the festival called Toxcatl, the greatest festival of the Mexican year, a young man was annually sacrificed in the character of Tezcatlipoca, "the god of gods," after having been maintained and worshipped as that great deity in person for a whole year. According to the old Franciscan monk Sahagun, our best authority on the Aztec religion, the sacrifice of the human god fell at Easter or a few days later, so that, if he is right, it would correspond in date as well as in character to the Christian festival of the death and resurrection of the Redeemer. More exactly he tells us that the sacrifice took place on the first day of the fifth Aztec month, which according to him began on the twenty-third or twenty-seventh day of April.

At this festival the great god died in the person of one human representative and came to life again in the person of another, who was destined to enjoy the fatal honour of divinity for a year and to perish, like all his predecessors, at the end of it. The young man singled out for this high dignity was carefully chosen from among the captives on the ground of his personal beauty. He had to be of unblemished body, slim as a reed and straight as a pillar, neither too tall nor too short. If through high living he grew too fat, he was obliged to reduce himself by drinking salt water. And in order that he might behave in his lofty station with becoming grace and dignity he was carefully trained to comport himself like a gentleman of the first quality, to speak correctly and elegantly, to play the flute, to smoke cigars and to snuff at flowers with a dandified air. He was honourably lodged in the temple, where the nobles waited on him and paid him homage, bringing him meat and serving him like a prince. The king himself saw to it that he was apparelled in gorgeous attire, "for already he esteemed him as a god." Eagle down was gummed to his head and white cock's feathers were stuck in his hair, which drooped to his girdle. A wreath of flowers like roasted maize crowned his brows, and a garland of the same flowers passed over his shoulders and under his armpits. Golden ornaments hung from his nose, golden armlets adorned his arms, golden bells jingled on his legs at every step he took; earrings of turquoise dangled from his ears, bracelets of turquoise bedecked his wrists; necklaces of shells encircled his neck and depended on his breast; he wore a mantle of network, and round his middle a rich waistcloth. When this bejewelled exquisite lounged through the streets playing on his flute, puffing at a cigar, and smelling at a nosegay, the people whom he met threw themselves on the earth before him and prayed to him with sighs and tears, taking up the dust in their hands and putting it in their mouths in token of the deepest humiliation and subjection. Women came forth with children in their arms and presented them to him, saluting him as a god. For "he passed for our Lord God; the people acknowledged him as the Lord." All who thus worshipped him on his passage he saluted gravely and courteously. Lest he should flee, he was everywhere attended by a guard of eight pages in the royal livery, four of them with shaven crowns like the palace-slaves, and four of them with the flowing locks of warriors; and if he contrived to escape, the captain of the guard had to take his place as the representative of the god and to die in his stead. Twenty days before he was to die, his costume was changed, and four damsels delicately nurtured and bearing the names of four goddesses—the Goddess of Flowers, the Goddess of the Young Maize, the Goddess "Our Mother among the Water," and the Goddess of Salt—were given him to be his brides, and with them he consorted. During the last five days divine honours were showered on the destined victim. The king remained in his palace while the whole court went after the human god. Solemn banquets and dances followed each other in regular succession and at appointed places. On the last day the young

man, attended by his wives and pages, embarked in a canoe covered with a royal canopy and was ferried across the lake to a spot where a little hill rose from the edge of the water. It was called the Mountain of Parting, because there his wives bade him a last farewell. Then, accompanied only by his pages, he repaired to a small and lonely temple by the wayside. Like the Mexican temples in general, it was built in the form of a pyramid; and as the young man ascended the stairs he broke at every step one of the flutes on which he had played in the days of his glory. On reaching the summit he was seized and held down by the priests on his back upon a block of stone, while one of them cut open his breast, thrust his hand into the wound, and wrenching out his heart held it up in sacrifice to the sun. The body of the dead god was not, like the bodies of common victims, sent rolling down the steps of the temple, but was carried down to the foot, where the head was cut off and spitted on a pike. Such was the regular end of the man who personated the greatest god of the Mexican pantheon.

The honour of living for a short time in the character of a god and dying a violent death in the same capacity was not restricted to men in Mexico; women were allowed, or rather compelled, to enjoy the glory and to share the doom as representatives of goddesses. Thus at a great festival in September, which was preceded by a strict fast of seven days, they sanctified a young slave girl of twelve or thirteen years, the prettiest they could find, to represent the Maize Goddess Chicomecohuatl. They invested her with the ornaments of the goddess, putting a mitre on her head and maize-cobs round her neck and in her hands, and fastening a green feather upright on the crown of her head to imitate an ear of maize. This they did, we are told, in order to signify that the maize was almost ripe at the time of the festival, but because it was still tender they chose a girl of tender years to play the part of the Maize Goddess. The whole long day they led the poor child in all her finery, with the green plume nodding on her head, from house to house dancing merrily to cheer people after the dulness and privations of the fast.

In the evening all the people assembled at the temple, the courts of which they lit up by a multitude of lanterns and candles. There they passed the night without sleeping, and at midnight, while the trumpets, flutes, and horns discoursed solemn music, a portable framework or palanquin was brought forth, bedecked with festoons of maize-cobs and peppers and filled with seeds of all sorts. This the bearers set down at the door of the chamber in which the wooden image of the goddess stood. Now the chamber was adorned and wreathed, both outside and inside, with wreaths of maize-cobs, peppers, pumpkins, roses, and seeds of every kind, a wonder to behold; the whole floor was covered deep with these verdant offerings of the pious. When the music ceased, a solemn procession came forth of priests and dignitaries, with flaring lights and smoking censers, leading in their midst the girl who played the part of the goddess. Then they made

her mount the framework, where she stood upright on the maize and peppers and pumpkins with which it was strewed, her hands resting on two bannisters to keep her from falling. Then the priests swung the smoking censers round her; the music struck up again, and while it played, a great dignitary of the temple suddenly stepped up to her with a razor in his hand and adroitly shore off the green feather she wore on her head, together with the hair in which it was fastened, snipping the lock off by the root. The feather and the hair he then presented to the wooden image of the goddess with great solemnity and elaborate ceremonies, weeping and giving her thanks for the fruits of the earth and the abundant crops which she had bestowed on the people that year; and as he wept and prayed, all the people, standing in the courts of the temple, wept and prayed with him. When that ceremony was over, the girl descended from the framework and was escorted to the place where she was to spend the rest of the night. But all the people kept watch in the courts of the temple by the light of torches till break of day.

The morning being come, and the courts of the temple being still crowded by the multitude, who would have deemed it sacrilege to quit the precincts, the priests again brought forth the damsel attired in the costume of the goddess, with the mitre on her head and the cobs of maize about her neck. Again she mounted the portable framework or palanquin and stood on it, supporting herself by her hands on the bannisters. Then the elders of the temple lifted it on their shoulders, and while some swung burning censers and others played on instruments or sang, they carried it in procession through the great courtyard to the hall of the god Huitzilopochtli and then back to the chamber, where stood the wooden image of the Maize Goddess, whom the girl personated. There they caused the damsel to descend from the palanquin and to stand on the heaps of corn and vegetables that had been spread in profusion on the floor of the sacred chamber. While she stood there all the elders and nobles came in a line, one behind the other, carrying saucers full of dry and clotted blood which they had drawn from their ears by way of penance during the seven days' fast. One by one they squatted on their haunches before her, which was the equivalent of falling on their knees with us, and scraping the crust of blood from the saucer cast it down before her as an offering in return for the benefits which she, as the embodiment of the Maize Goddess, had conferred upon them. When the men had thus humbly offered their blood to the human representative of the goddess, the women, forming a long line, did so likewise, each of them dropping on her hams before the girl and scraping her blood from the saucer. The ceremony lasted a long time, for great and small, young and old, all without exception had to pass before the incarnate deity and make their offering. When it was over, the people returned home with glad hearts to feast on flesh and viands of every sort as merrily, we are told, as good Christians at Easter partake of meat and other carnal mercies after the long abstinence of Lent. And when they had eaten and

drunk their fill and rested after the night watch, they returned quite refreshed to the temple to see the end of the festival. And the end of the festival was this. The multitude being assembled, the priests solemnly incensed the girl who personated the goddess; then they threw her on her back on the heap of corn and seeds, cut off her head, caught the gushing blood in a tub, and sprinkled the blood on the wooden image of the goddess, the walls of the chamber, and the offerings of corn, peppers, pumpkins, seeds, and vegetables which cumbered the floor. After that they flayed the headless trunk, and one of the priests made shift to squeeze himself into the bloody skin. Having done so they clad him in all the robes which the girl had worn; they put the mitre on his head, the necklace of golden maize-cobs about his neck, the maize-cobs of feathers and gold in his hands; and thus arrayed they led him forth in public, all of them dancing to the tuck of drum, while he acted as fugleman, skipping and posturing at the head of the procession as briskly as he could be expected to do, incommoded as he was by the tight and clammy skin of the girl and by her clothes, which must have been much too small for a grown man.

In the foregoing custom the identification of the young girl with the Maize Goddess appears to be complete. The golden maize-cobs which she wore round her neck, the artificial maize-cobs which she carried in her hands, the green feather which was stuck in her hair in imitation (we are told) of a green ear of maize, all set her forth as a personification of the corn-spirit; and we are expressly informed that she was specially chosen as a young girl to represent the young maize, which at the time of the festival had not yet fully ripened. Further, her identification with the corn and the corn-goddess was clearly announced by making her stand on the heaps of maize and there receive the homage and blood-offerings of the whole people, who thereby returned her thanks for the benefits which in her character of a divinity she was supposed to have conferred upon them. Once more, the practice of beheading her on a heap of corn and seeds and sprinkling her blood, not only on the image of the Maize Goddess, but on the piles of maize, peppers, pumpkins, seeds, and vegetables, can seemingly have had no other object but to quicken and strengthen the crops of corn and the fruits of the earth in general by infusing into their representatives the blood of the Corn Goddess herself. The analogy of this Mexican sacrifice, the meaning of which appears to be indisputable, may be allowed to strengthen the interpretation which I have given of other human sacrifices offered for the crops. If the Mexican girl, whose blood was sprinkled on the maize, indeed personated the Maize Goddess, it becomes more than ever probable that the girl whose blood the Pawnees similarly sprinkled on the seed corn personated in like manner the female Spirit of the Corn; and so with the other human beings whom other races have slaughtered for the sake of promoting the growth of the crops.

Lastly, the concluding act of the sacred drama, in which the body of the dead Maize Goddess was flayed and her skin worn, together

with all her sacred insignia, by a man who danced before the people in this grim attire, seems to be best explained on the hypothesis that it was intended to ensure that the divine death should be immediately followed by the divine resurrection. If that was so, we may infer with some degree of probability that the practice of killing a human representative of a deity has commonly, perhaps always, been regarded merely as a means of perpetuating the divine energies in the fulness of youthful vigour, untainted by the weakness and frailty of age, from which they must have suffered if the deity had been allowed to die a natural death.

These Mexican rites suffice to prove that human sacrifices of the sort I suppose to have prevailed at Aricia were, as a matter of fact, regularly offered by a people whose level of culture was probably not inferior, if indeed it was not distinctly superior, to that occupied by the Italian races at the early period to which the origin of the Arician priesthood must be referred. The positive and indubitable evidence of the prevalence of such sacrifices in one part of the world may reasonably be allowed to strengthen the probability of their prevalence in places for which the evidence is less full and trustworthy. Taken all together, the facts which we have passed in review seem to show that the custom of killing men whom their worshippers regard as divine has prevailed in many parts of the world.

CHAPTER LX

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

§ 1. *Not to touch the Earth.*—At the outset of this book two questions were proposed for answer: Why had the priest of Aricia to slay his predecessor? And why, before doing so, had he to pluck the Golden Bough? Of these two questions the first has now been answered. The priest of Aricia, if I am right, was one of those sacred kings or human divinities on whose life the welfare of the community and even the course of nature in general are believed to be intimately dependent. It does not appear that the subjects or worshippers of such a spiritual potentate form to themselves any very clear notion of the exact relationship in which they stand to him; probably their ideas on the point are vague and fluctuating, and we should err if we attempted to define the relationship with logical precision. All that the people know, or rather imagine, is that somehow they themselves, their cattle, and their crops are mysteriously bound up with their divine king, so that according as he is well or ill the community is healthy or sickly, the flocks and herds thrive or languish with disease, and the fields yield an abundant or a scanty harvest. The worst evil which they can conceive of is the natural death of their ruler, whether he succumb to sickness or old age, for in the opinion of his followers such a death

would entail the most disastrous consequences on themselves and their possessions; fatal epidemics would sweep away man and beast, the earth would refuse her increase, nay, the very frame of nature itself might be dissolved. To guard against these catastrophes it is necessary to put the king to death while he is still in the full bloom of his divine manhood, in order that his sacred life, transmitted in unabated force to his successor, may renew its youth, and thus by successive transmissions through a perpetual line of vigorous incarnations may remain eternally fresh and young, a pledge and security that men and animals shall in like manner renew their youth by a perpetual succession of generations, and that seedtime and harvest, and summer and winter, and rain and sunshine shall never fail. That, if my conjecture is right, was why the priest of Aricia, the King of the Wood at Nemi, had regularly to perish by the sword of his successor.

But we have still to ask, What was the Golden Bough? and why had each candidate for the Arician priesthood to pluck it before he could slay the priest? These questions I will now try to answer.

It will be well to begin by noticing two of those rules or taboos by which, as we have seen, the life of divine kings or priests is regulated. The first of the rules to which I would call the reader's attention is that the divine personage may not touch the ground with his foot. This rule was observed by the supreme pontiff of the Zapotecs in Mexico; he profaned his sanctity if he so much as touched the ground with his foot. Montezuma, emperor of Mexico, never set foot on the ground; he was always carried on the shoulders of noblemen, and if he lighted anywhere they laid rich tapestry for him to walk upon. For the Mikado of Japan to touch the ground with his foot was a shameful degradation; indeed, in the sixteenth century, it was enough to deprive him of his office. Outside his palace he was carried on men's shoulders; within it he walked on exquisitely wrought mats. The king and queen of Tahiti might not touch the ground anywhere but within their hereditary domains; for the ground on which they trod became sacred. In travelling from place to place they were carried on the shoulders of sacred men. They were always accompanied by several pairs of these sanctified attendants; and when it became necessary to change their bearers, the king and queen vaulted on to the shoulders of their new bearers without letting their feet touch the ground. It was an evil omen if the king of Dosuma touched the ground, and he had to perform an expiatory ceremony. Within his palace the king of Persia walked on carpets on which no one else might tread; outside of it he was never seen on foot but only in a chariot or on horseback. In old days the king of Siam never set foot upon the earth, but was carried on a throne of gold from place to place. Formerly neither the kings of Uganda, nor their mothers, nor their queens might walk on foot outside of the spacious enclosures in which they lived. Whenever they went forth they were carried on the shoulders of men of the Buffalo clan, several of whom accompanied any of these royal personages on a journey and took it in turn to bear

the burden. The king sat astride the bearer's neck with a leg over each shoulder and his feet tucked under the bearer's arms. When one of these royal carriers grew tired he shot the king onto the shoulders of a second man without allowing the royal feet to touch the ground. In this way they went at a great pace and travelled long distances in a day, when the king was on a journey. The bearers had a special hut in the king's enclosure in order to be at hand the moment they were wanted. Among the Bakuba, or rather Bushongo, a nation in the southern region of the Congo, down to a few years ago persons of the royal blood were forbidden to touch the ground; they must sit on a hide, a chair, or the back of a slave, who crouched on hands and feet; their feet rested on the feet of others. When they travelled they were carried on the backs of men; but the king journeyed in a litter supported on shafts. Among the Ibo people about Awka, in Southern Nigeria, the priest of the Earth has to observe many taboos; for example, he may not see a corpse, and if he meets one on the road he must hide his eyes with his wristlet. He must abstain from many foods, such as eggs, birds of all sorts, mutton, dog, bush-buck, and so forth. He may neither wear nor touch a mask, and no masked man may enter his house. If a dog enters his house, it is killed and thrown out. As priest of the Earth he may not sit on the bare ground, nor eat things that have fallen on the ground, nor may earth be thrown at him. According to ancient Brahmanic ritual a king at his inauguration trod on a tiger's skin and a golden plate; he was shod with shoes of boar's skin, and so long as he lived thereafter he might not stand on the earth with his bare feet.

But besides persons who are permanently sacred or tabooed and are therefore permanently forbidden to touch the ground with their feet, there are others who enjoy the character of sanctity or taboo only on certain occasions, and to whom accordingly the prohibition in question only applies at the definite seasons during which they exhale the odour of sanctity. Thus among the Kayans or Bahaus of Central Borneo, while the priestesses are engaged in the performance of certain rites they may not step on the ground, and boards are laid for them to tread on. Warriors, again, on the war-path are surrounded, so to say, by an atmosphere of taboo; hence some Indians of North America might not sit on the bare ground the whole time they were out on a warlike expedition. In Laos the hunting of elephants gives rise to many taboos; one of them is that the chief hunter may not touch the earth with his foot. Accordingly, when he alights from his elephant, the others spread a carpet of leaves for him to step upon.

Apparently holiness, magical virtue, taboo, or whatever we may call that mysterious quality which is supposed to pervade sacred or tabooed persons, is conceived by the primitive philosopher as a physical substance or fluid, with which the sacred man is charged just as a Leyden jar is charged with electricity; and exactly as the electricity in the jar can be discharged by contact with a good conductor, so the holiness or magical virtue in the man can be discharged and drained

away by contact with the earth, which on this theory serves as an excellent conductor for the magical fluid. Hence in order to preserve the charge from running to waste, the sacred or tabooed personage must be carefully prevented from touching the ground; in electrical language he must be insulated, if he is not to be emptied of the precious substance or fluid with which he, as a vial, is filled to the brim. And in many cases apparently the insulation of the tabooed person is recommended as a precaution not merely for his own sake but for the sake of others; for since the virtue of holiness or taboo is, so to say, a powerful explosive which the smallest touch may detonate, it is necessary in the interest of the general safety to keep it within narrow bounds, lest breaking out it should blast, blight, and destroy whatever it comes into contact with.

§ 2. *Not to see the Sun.*—The second rule to be here noted is that the sun may not shine upon the divine person. This rule was observed both by the Mikado and by the pontiff of the Zapotecs. The latter "was looked upon as a god whom the earth was not worthy to hold, nor the sun to shine upon." The Japanese would not allow that the Mikado should expose his sacred person to the open air, and the sun was not thought worthy to shine on his head. The Indians of Granada, in South America, "kept those who were to be rulers or commanders, whether men or women, locked up for several years when they were children, some of them seven years, and this so close that they were not to see the sun, for if they should happen to see it they forfeited their lordship, eating certain sorts of food appointed; and those who were their keepers at certain times went into their retreat or prison and scourged them severely." Thus, for example, the heir to the throne of Bogota, who was not the son but the sister's son of the king, had to undergo a rigorous training from his infancy; he lived in complete retirement in a temple, where he might not see the sun nor eat salt nor converse with a woman; he was surrounded by guards who observed his conduct and noted all his actions; if he broke a single one of the rules laid down for him, he was deemed infamous and forfeited all his rights to the throne. So, too, the heir to the kingdom of Sogamoso, before succeeding to the crown, had to fast for seven years in the temple, being shut up in the dark and not allowed to see the sun or light. The prince who was to become Inca of Peru had to fast for a month without seeing light.

§ 3. *The Seclusion of Girls at Puberty.*—Now it is remarkable that the foregoing two rules—not to touch the ground and not to see the sun—are observed either separately or conjointly by girls at puberty in many parts of the world. Thus amongst the negroes of Loango girls at puberty are confined in separate huts, and they may not touch the ground with any part of their bare body. Among the Zulus and kindred tribes of South Africa, when the first signs of puberty show themselves "while a girl is walking, gathering wood, or working in the field, she runs to the river and hides herself among the reeds for the day, so as not to be seen by men. She covers her head carefully with

her blanket that the sun may not shine on it and shrivel her up into a withered skeleton, as would result from exposure to the sun's beams. After dark she returns to her home and is secluded" in a hut for some time. With the Awa-nkonde, a tribe at the northern end of Lake Nyassa, it is a rule that after her first menstruation a girl must be kept apart, with a few companions of her own sex, in a darkened house. The floor is covered with dry banana leaves, but no fire may be lit in the house, which is called "the house of the Awasungu," that is, "of maidens who have no hearts."

In New Ireland girls are confined for four or five years in small cages, being kept in the dark and not allowed to set foot on the ground. The custom has been thus described by an eye-witness. "I heard from a teacher about some strange custom connected with some of the young girls here, so I asked the chief to take me to the house where they were. The house was about twenty-five feet in length, and stood in a reed and bamboo enclosure, across the entrance to which a bundle of dried grass was suspended to show that it was strictly '*tabu*.' Inside the house were three conical structures about seven or eight feet in height, and about ten or twelve feet in circumference at the bottom, and for about four feet from the ground, at which point they tapered off to a point at the top. These cages were made of the broad leaves of the pandanus-tree, sewn quite close together so that no light and little or no air could enter. On one side of each is an opening which is closed by a double door of plaited cocoa-nut tree and pandanus-tree leaves. About three feet from the ground there is a stage of bamboos which forms the floor. In each of these cages we were told there was a young woman confined, each of whom had to remain for at least four or five years, without ever being allowed to go outside the house. I could scarcely credit the story when I heard it; the whole thing seemed too horrible to be true. I spoke to the chief, and told him that I wished to see the inside of the cages, and also to see the girls that I might make them a present of a few beads. He told me that it was '*tabu*,' forbidden for any men but their own relations to look at them; but I suppose the promised beads acted as an inducement, and so he sent away for some old lady who had charge, and who alone is allowed to open the doors. While we were waiting we could hear the girls talking to the chief in a querulous way as if objecting to something or expressing their fears. The old woman came at length and certainly she did not seem a very pleasant jailor or guardian; nor did she seem to favour the request of the chief to allow us to see the girls, as she regarded us with anything but pleasant looks. However, she had to undo the door when the chief told her to do so, and then the girls peeped out at us, and, when told to do so, they held out their hands for the beads. I, however, purposely sat at some distance away and merely held out the beads to them, as I wished to draw them quite outside, that I might inspect the inside of the cages. This desire of mine gave rise to another difficulty, as these girls were not allowed to put their feet to the ground all the time they were confined in these

places. However, they wished to get the beads, and so the old lady had to go outside and collect a lot of pieces of wood and bamboo, which she placed on the ground, and then going to one of the girls, she helped her down and held her hand as she stepped from one piece of wood to another until she came near enough to get the beads I held out to her. I then went to inspect the inside of the cage out of which she had come, but could scarcely put my head inside of it, the atmosphere was so hot and stifling. It was clean and contained nothing but a few short lengths of bamboo for holding water. There was only room for the girl to sit or lie down in a crouched position on the bamboo platform, and when the doors are shut it must be nearly or quite dark inside. The girls are never allowed to come out except once a day to bathe in a dish or wooden bowl placed close to each cage. They say that they perspire profusely. They are placed in these stifling cages when quite young, and must remain there until they are young women, when they are taken out and have each a great marriage feast provided for them. One of them was about fourteen or fifteen years old, and the chief told us that she had been there for five years, but would soon be taken out now. The other two were about eight and ten years old, and they have to stay there for several years longer."

In Kabadi, a district of British New Guinea, "daughters of chiefs, when they are about twelve or thirteen years of age, are kept indoors for two or three years, never being allowed, under any pretence, to descend from the house, and the house is so shaded that the sun cannot shine on them." Among the Yabim and Bukaua, two neighbouring and kindred tribes on the coast of Northern New Guinea, a girl at puberty is secluded for some five or six weeks in an inner part of the house; but she may not sit on the floor, lest her uncleanliness should cleave to it, so a log of wood is placed for her to squat on. Moreover, she may not touch the ground with her feet; hence if she is obliged to quit the house for a short time, she is muffled up in mats and walks on two halves of a coco-nut shell, which are fastened like sandals to her feet by creeping plants. Among the Ot Danoms of Borneo girls at the age of eight or ten years are shut up in a little room or cell of the house, and cut off from all intercourse with the world for a long time. The cell, like the rest of the house, is raised on piles above the ground, and is lit by a single small window opening on a lonely place, so that the girl is in almost total darkness. She may not leave the room on any pretext whatever, not even for the most necessary purposes. None of her family may see her all the time she is shut up, but a single slave woman is appointed to wait on her. During her lonely confinement, which often lasts seven years, the girl occupies herself in weaving mats or with other handiwork. Her bodily growth is stunted by the long want of exercise, and when, on attaining womanhood, she is brought out, her complexion is pale and wax-like. She is now shown the sun, the earth, the water, the trees, and the flowers, as if she were newly born. Then a great feast is made, a slave is killed, and the girl is smeared with his blood. In Ceram girls at puberty were formerly

shut up by themselves in a hut which was kept dark. In Yap, one of the Caroline Islands, should a girl be overtaken by her first menstruation on the public road, she may not sit down on the earth, but must beg for a coco-nut shell to put under her. She is shut up for several days in a small hut at a distance from her parents' house, and afterwards she is bound to sleep for a hundred days in one of the special houses which are provided for the use of menstruous women.

In the island of Mabuiag, Torres Straits, when the signs of puberty appear on a girl, a circle of bushes is made in a dark corner of the house. Here, decked with shoulder-belts, armlets, leglets just below the knees, and anklets, wearing a chaplet on her head, and shell ornaments in her ears, on her chest, and on her back, she squats in the midst of the bushes, which are piled so high round about her that only her head is visible. In this state of seclusion she must remain for three months. All this time the sun may not shine upon her, but at night she is allowed to slip out of the hut, and the bushes that hedge her in are then changed. She may not feed herself or handle food, but is fed by one or two old women, her maternal aunts, who are especially appointed to look after her. One of these women cooks food for her at a special fire in the forest. The girl is forbidden to eat turtle or turtle eggs during the season when the turtles are breeding; but no vegetable food is refused her. No man, not even her own father, may come into the house while her seclusion lasts; for if her father saw her at this time he would certainly have bad luck in his fishing, and would probably smash his canoe the very next time he went out in it. At the end of the three months she is carried down to a fresh-water creek by her attendants, hanging on to their shoulders in such a way that her feet do not touch the ground, while the women of the tribe form a ring round her, and thus escort her to the beach. Arrived at the shore, she is stripped of her ornaments, and the bearers stagger with her into the creek, where they immerse her, and all the other women join in splashing water over both the girl and her bearers. When they come out of the water one of the two attendants makes a heap of grass for her charge to squat upon. The other runs to the reef, catches a small crab, tears off its claws, and hastens back with them to the creek. Here in the meantime a fire has been kindled, and the claws are roasted at it. The girl is then fed by her attendants with the roasted claws. After that she is freshly decorated, and the whole party marches back to the village in a single rank, the girl walking in the centre between her two old aunts, who hold her by the wrists. The husbands of her aunts now receive her and lead her into the house of one of them, where all partake of food, and the girl is allowed once more to feed herself in the usual manner. A dance follows, in which the girl takes a prominent part, dancing between the husbands of the two aunts who had charge of her in her retirement.

Among the Yaraikanna tribe of Cape York Peninsula, in Northern Queensland, a girl at puberty is said to live by herself for a month or six weeks; no man may see her, though any woman may. She

stays in a hut or shelter specially made for her, on the floor of which she lies supine. She may not see the sun, and towards sunset she must keep her eyes shut until the sun has gone down, otherwise it is thought that her nose will be diseased. During her seclusion she may eat nothing that lives in salt water, or a snake would kill her. An old woman waits upon her and supplies her with roots, yams, and water. Some Australian tribes are wont to bury their girls at such seasons more or less deeply in the ground, perhaps in order to hide them from the light of the sun.

Among the Indians of California a girl at her first menstruation "was thought to be possessed of a particular degree of supernatural power, and this was not always regarded as entirely defiling or malevolent. Often, however, there was a strong feeling of the power of evil inherent in her condition. Not only was she secluded from her family and the community, but an attempt was made to seclude the world from her. One of the injunctions most strongly laid upon her was not to look about her. She kept her head bowed and was forbidden to see the world and the sun. Some tribes covered her with a blanket. Many of the customs in this connection resembled those of the North Pacific Coast most strongly, such as the prohibition to the girl to touch or scratch her head with her hand, a special implement being furnished her for the purpose. Sometimes she could eat only when fed and in other cases fasted altogether."

Among the Chinook Indians who inhabited the coast of Washington State, when a chief's daughter attained to puberty, she was hidden for five days from the view of the people; she might not look at them nor at the sky, nor might she pick berries. It was believed that if she were to look at the sky, the weather would be bad; that if she picked berries, it would rain; and that when she hung her towel of cedar-bark on a spruce-tree, the tree withered up at once. She went out of the house by a separate door and bathed in a creek far from the village. She fasted for some days, and for many days more she might not eat fresh food.

Amongst the Aht or Nootka Indians of Vancouver Island, when girls reach puberty they are placed in a sort of gallery in the house "and are there surrounded completely with mats, so that neither the sun nor any fire can be seen. In this cage they remain for several days. Water is given them, but no food. The longer a girl remains in this retirement the greater honour is it to the parents; but she is disgraced for life if it is known that she has seen fire or the sun during this initiatory ordeal." Pictures of the mythical thunder-bird are painted on the screens behind which she hides. During her seclusion she may neither move nor lie down, but must always sit in a squatting posture. She may not touch her hair with her hands, but is allowed to scratch her head with a comb or a piece of bone provided for the purpose. To scratch her body is also forbidden, as it is believed that every scratch would leave a scar. For eight months after reaching maturity she may not eat any fresh food, particularly salmon; moreover, she must eat by herself, and use a cup and dish of her own.

In the Tsetsaut tribe of British Columbia a girl at puberty wears a large hat of skin which comes down over her face and screens it from the sun. It is believed that if she were to expose her face to the sun or to the sky, rain would fall. The hat protects her face also against the fire, which ought not to strike her skin; to shield her hands she wears mittens. In her mouth she carries the tooth of an animal to prevent her own teeth from becoming hollow. For a whole year she may not see blood unless her face is blackened; otherwise she would grow blind. For two years she wears the hat and lives in a hut by herself, although she is allowed to see other people. At the end of two years a man takes the hat from her head and throws it away. In the Bilqula or Bella Coola tribe of British Columbia, when a girl attains puberty she must stay in the shed which serves as her bedroom, where she has a separate fireplace. She is not allowed to descend to the main part of the house, and may not sit by the fire of the family. For four days she is bound to remain motionless in a sitting posture. She fasts during the day, but is allowed a little food and drink very early in the morning. After the four days' seclusion she may leave her room, but only through a separate opening cut in the floor, for the houses are raised on piles. She may not yet come into the chief room. In leaving the house she wears a large hat which protects her face against the rays of the sun. It is believed that if the sun were to shine on her face her eyes would suffer. She may pick berries on the hills, but may not come near the river or sea for a whole year. Were she to eat fresh salmon she would lose her senses, or her mouth would be changed into a long beak.

Amongst the Tlingit (Thlinkeet) or Kolosh Indians of Alaska, when a girl showed signs of womanhood she used to be confined to a little hut or cage, which was completely blocked up with the exception of a small air-hole. In this dark and filthy abode she had to remain a year, without fire, exercise, or associates. Only her mother and a female slave might supply her with nourishment. Her food was put in at the little window; she had to drink out of the wing-bone of a white-headed eagle. The time of her seclusion was afterwards reduced in some places to six or three months or even less. She had to wear a sort of hat with long flaps, that her gaze might not pollute the sky; for she was thought unfit for the sun to shine upon, and it was imagined that her look would destroy the luck of a hunter, fisher, or gambler, turn things to stone, and do other mischief. At the end of her confinement her old clothes were burnt, new ones were made, and a feast was given, at which a slit was cut in her under lip parallel to the mouth, and a piece of wood or shell was inserted to keep the aperture open. Among the Koniags, an Esquimau people of Alaska, a girl at puberty was placed in a small hut in which she had to remain on her hands and feet for six months; then the hut was enlarged a little so as to allow her to straighten her back, but in this posture she had to remain for six months more. All this time she was regarded as an unclean being with whom no one might hold intercourse.

When symptoms of puberty appeared on a girl for the first time, the Guaranis of Southern Brazil, on the borders of Paraguay, used to sew her up in her hammock, leaving only a small opening in it to allow her to breathe. In this condition, wrapt up and shrouded like a corpse, she was kept for two or three days or so long as the symptoms lasted, and during this time she had to observe a most rigorous fast. After that she was entrusted to a matron, who cut the girl's hair and enjoined her to abstain most strictly from eating flesh of any kind until her hair should be grown long enough to hide her ears. In similar circumstances the Chiriguanos of South-eastern Bolivia hoisted the girl in her hammock to the roof, where she stayed for a month: the second month the hammock was let half-way down from the roof; and in the third month old women, armed with sticks, entered the hut and ran about striking everything they met, saying they were hunting the snake that had wounded the girl.

Among the Matacos or Mataguayos, an Indian tribe of the Gran Chaco, a girl at puberty has to remain in seclusion for some time. She lies covered up with branches or other things in a corner of the hut, seeing no one and speaking to no one, and during this time she may eat neither flesh nor fish. Meantime a man beats a drum in front of the house. Among the Yuracares, an Indian tribe of Eastern Bolivia, when a girl perceives the signs of puberty, her father constructs a little hut of palm leaves near the house. In this cabin he shuts up his daughter so that she cannot see the light, and there she remains fasting rigorously for four days.

Amongst the Macusis of British Guiana, when a girl shows the first signs of puberty, she is hung in a hammock at the highest point of the hut. For the first few days she may not leave the hammock by day, but at night she must come down, light a fire, and spend the night beside it, else she would break out in sores on her neck, throat, and other parts of her body. So long as the symptoms are at their height, she must fast rigorously. When they have abated, she may come down and take up her abode in a little compartment that is made for her in the darkest corner of the hut. In the morning she may cook her food, but it must be at a separate fire and in a vessel of her own. After about ten days the magician comes and undoes the spell by muttering charms and breathing on her and on the more valuable of the things with which she has come in contact. The pots and drinking-vessels which she used are broken and the fragments buried. After her first bath, the girl must submit to be beaten by her mother with thin rods without uttering a cry. At the end of the second period she is again beaten, but not afterwards. She is now "clean," and can mix again with people. Other Indians of Guiana, after keeping the girl in her hammock at the top of the hut for a month, expose her to certain large ants, whose bite is very painful. Sometimes, in addition to being stung with ants, the sufferer has to fast day and night so long as she remains slung up on high in her hammock, so that when she comes down she is reduced to a skeleton.

When a Hindoo maiden reaches maturity she is kept in a dark room for four days, and is forbidden to see the sun. She is regarded as unclean; no one may touch her. Her diet is restricted to boiled rice, milk, sugar, curd, and tamarind without salt. On the morning of the fifth day she goes to a neighbouring tank, accompanied by five women whose husbands are alive. Smeared with turmeric water, they all bathe and return home, throwing away the mat and other things that were in the room. The Rarhi Brahmans of Bengal compel a girl at puberty to live alone, and do not allow her to see the face of any male. For three days she remains shut up in a dark room, and has to undergo certain penances. Fish, flesh, and sweetmeats are forbidden her; she must live upon rice and ghee. Among the Tiyans of Malabar a girl is thought to be polluted for four days from the beginning of her first menstruation. During this time she must keep to the north side of the house, where she sleeps on a grass mat of a particular kind, in a room festooned with garlands of young coco-nut leaves. Another girl keeps her company and sleeps with her, but she may not touch any other person, tree or plant. Further, she may not see the sky, and woe betide her if she catches sight of a crow or a cat! Her diet must be strictly vegetarian, without salt, tamarinds, or chillies. She is armed against evil spirits by a knife, which is placed on the mat or carried on her person.

In Cambodia a girl at puberty is put to bed under a mosquito curtain, where she should stay a hundred days. Usually, however, four, five, ten, or twenty days are thought enough; and even this, in a hot climate and under the close meshes of the curtain, is sufficiently trying. According to another account, a Cambodian maiden at puberty is said to "enter into the shade." During her retirement, which, according to the rank and position of her family, may last any time from a few days to several years, she has to observe a number of rules, such as not to be seen by a strange man, not to eat flesh or fish, and so on. She goes nowhere, not even to the pagoda. But this state of seclusion is discontinued during eclipses; at such times she goes forth and pays her devotions to the monster who is supposed to cause eclipses by catching the heavenly bodies between his teeth. This permission to break her rule of retirement and appear abroad during an eclipse seems to show how literally the injunction is interpreted which forbids maidens entering on womanhood to look upon the sun.

A superstition so widely diffused as this might be expected to leave traces in legends and folk-tales. And it has done so. The old Greek story of Danae, who was confined by her father in a subterranean chamber or a brazen tower, but impregnated by Zeus, who reached her in the shape of a shower of gold, perhaps belongs to this class of tales. It has its counterpart in the legend which the Kirghiz of Siberia tell of their ancestry. A certain Khan had a fair daughter, whom he kept in a dark iron house, that no man might see her. An old woman tended her; and when the girl was grown

to maidenhood she asked the old woman, "Where do you go so often?" "My child," said the old dame, "there is a bright world. In that bright world your father and mother live, and all sorts of people live there. That is where I go." The maiden said, "Good mother, I will tell nobody, but show me that bright world." So the old woman took the girl out of the iron house. But when she saw the bright world, the girl tottered and fainted; and the eye of God fell upon her, and she conceived. Her angry father put her in a golden chest and sent her floating away (fairy gold can float in fairyland) over the wide sea. The shower of gold in the Greek story, and the eye of God in the Kirghiz legend, probably stand for sunlight and the sun. The idea that women may be impregnated by the sun is not uncommon in legends, and there are even traces of it in marriage customs.

§ 4. *Reasons for the Seclusion of Girls at Puberty.*—The motive for the restraints so commonly imposed on girls at puberty is the deeply engrained dread which primitive man universally entertains of menstruous blood. He fears it at all times but especially on its first appearance; hence the restrictions under which women lie at their first menstruation are usually more stringent than those which they have to observe at any subsequent recurrence of the mysterious flow. Some evidence of the fear and of the customs based on it has been cited in an earlier part of this work; but as the terror, for it is nothing less, which the phenomenon periodically strikes into the mind of the savage has deeply influenced his life and institutions, it may be well to illustrate the subject with some further examples.

Thus in the Encounter Bay tribe of South Australia there is, or used to be, a "superstition which obliges a woman to separate herself from the camp at the time of her monthly illness, when if a young man or boy should approach, she calls out, and he immediately makes a circuit to avoid her. If she is neglectful upon this point, she exposes herself to scolding, and sometimes to severe beating by her husband or nearest relation, because the boys are told from their infancy, that if they see the blood they will early become grey-headed, and their strength will fail prematurely." The Dieri of Central Australia believe that if women at these times were to eat fish or bathe in a river, the fish would all die and the water would dry up. The Arunta of the same region forbid menstruous women to gather the *irriakura* bulbs, which form a staple article of diet for both men and women. They think that were a woman to break this rule, the supply of bulbs would fail.

In some Australian tribes the seclusion of menstruous women was even more rigid, and was enforced by severer penalties than a scolding or a beating. Thus "there is a regulation relating to camps in the Wakelbura tribe which forbids the women coming into the encampment by the same path as the men. Any violation of this rule would in a large camp be punished with death. The reason for this is the dread with which they regard the menstrual period of women. During such a time, a woman is kept entirely away from

the camp, half a mile at least. A woman in such a condition has boughs of some tree of her totem tied round her loins, and is constantly watched and guarded, for it is thought that should any male be so unfortunate as to see a woman in such a condition, he would die. If such a woman were to let herself be seen by a man, she would probably be put to death. When the woman has recovered, she is painted red and white, her head covered with feathers, and returns to the camp."

In Muralug, one of the Torres Straits Islands, a menstruous woman may not eat anything that lives in the sea, else the natives believe that the fisheries would fail. In Galela, to the west of New Guinea, women at their monthly periods may not enter a tobacco-field, or the plants would be attacked by disease. The Minangka-bauers of Sumatra are persuaded that if a woman in her unclean state were to go near a rice-field, the crop would be spoiled.

The Bushmen of South Africa think that, by a glance of a girl's eye at the time when she ought to be kept in strict retirement, men become fixed in whatever positions they happen to occupy, with whatever they were holding in their hands, and are changed into trees that talk. Cattle-rearing tribes of South Africa hold that their cattle would die if the milk were drunk by a menstruous woman; and they fear the same disaster if a drop of her blood were to fall on the ground and the oxen were to pass over it. To prevent such a calamity women in general, not menstruous women only, are forbidden to enter the cattle enclosure; and more than that, they may not use the ordinary paths in entering the village or in passing from one hut to another. They are obliged to make circuitous tracks at the back of the huts in order to avoid the ground in the middle of the village where the cattle stand or lie down. These women's tracks may be seen at every Caffre village. Among the Baganda, in like manner, no menstruous woman might drink milk or come into contact with any milk-vessel; and she might not touch anything that belonged to her husband, nor sit on his mat, nor cook his food. If she touched anything of his at such a time it was deemed equivalent to wishing him dead or to actually working magic for his destruction. Were she to handle any article of his, he would surely fall ill; were she to touch his weapons, he would certainly be killed in the next battle. Further, the Baganda would not suffer a menstruous woman to visit a well; if she did so, they feared that the water would dry up, and that she herself would fall sick and die, unless she confessed her fault and the medicine-man made atonement for her. Among the Akikuyu of British East Africa, if a new hut is built in a village and the wife chances to menstruate in it on the day she lights the first fire there, the hut must be broken down and demolished the very next day. The woman may on no account sleep a second night in it; there is a curse both on her and on it.

According to the Talmud, if a woman at the beginning of her period passes between two men, she thereby kills one of them. Peasants

of the Lebanon think that menstruous women are the cause of many misfortunes; their shadow causes flowers to wither and trees to perish, it even arrests the movements of serpents; if one of them mounts a horse, the animal might die or at least be disabled for a long time.

The Guayquiries of the Orinoco believe that when a woman has her courses, everything upon which she steps will die, and that if a man treads on the place where she has passed, his legs will immediately swell up. Among the Bri-bri Indians of Costa Rica a married woman at her periods uses for plates only banana leaves, which, when she has done with them, she throws away in a sequestered spot; for should a cow find and eat them, the animal would waste away and perish. Also she drinks only out of a special vessel, because any person who should afterwards drink out of the same vessel would infallibly pine away and die.

Among most tribes of North American Indians the custom was that women in their courses retired from the camp or the village and lived during the time of their uncleanness in special huts or shelters which were appropriated to their use. There they dwelt apart, eating and sleeping by themselves, warming themselves at their own fires, and strictly abstaining from all communications with men, who shunned them just as if they were stricken with the plague.

Thus, to take examples, the Creek and kindred Indians of the United States compelled women at menstruation to live in separate huts at some distance from the village. There the women had to stay, at the risk of being surprised and cut off by enemies. It was thought "a most horrid and dangerous pollution" to go near the women at such times; and the danger extended to enemies who, if they slew the women, had to cleanse themselves from the pollution by means of certain sacred herbs and roots. The Stseelis Indians of British Columbia imagined that if a menstruous woman were to step over a bundle of arrows, the arrows would thereby be rendered useless and might even cause the death of their owner; and similarly that if she passed in front of a hunter who carried a gun, the weapon would never shoot straight again. Among the Chippeways and other Indians of the Hudson Bay Territory, menstruous women are excluded from the camp, and take up their abode in huts of branches. They wear long hoods, which effectually conceal the head and breast. They may not touch the household furniture nor any objects used by men; for their touch "is supposed to defile them, so that their subsequent use would be followed by certain mischief or misfortune," such as disease or death. They must drink out of a swan's bone. They may not walk on the common paths nor cross the tracks of animals. They "are never permitted to walk on the ice of rivers or lakes, or near the part where the men are hunting beaver, or where a fishing-net is set, for fear of averting their success. They are also prohibited at those times from partaking of the head of any animal, and even from walking in or crossing the track where the head of a deer, moose, beaver, and many other animals

have lately been carried, either on a sledge or on the back. To be guilty of a violation of this custom is considered as of the greatest importance; because they firmly believe that it would be a means of preventing the hunter from having an equal success in his future excursions." So the Lapps forbid women at menstruation to walk on that part of the shore where the fishers are in the habit of setting out their fish; and the Esquimaux of Bering Strait believe that if hunters were to come near women in their courses they would catch no game. For a like reason the Carrier Indians will not suffer a menstruous woman to cross the tracks of animals; if need be, she is carried over them. They think that if she waded in a stream or a lake, the fish would die.

Amongst the civilised nations of Europe the superstitions which cluster round this mysterious aspect of woman's nature are not less extravagant than those which prevail among savages. In the oldest existing cyclopaedia—the *Natural History* of Pliny—the list of dangers apprehended from menstruation is longer than any furnished by mere barbarians. According to Pliny, the touch of a menstruous woman turned wine to vinegar, blighted crops, killed seedlings, blasted gardens, brought down the fruit from trees, dimmed mirrors, blunted razors, rusted iron and brass (especially at the waning of the moon), killed bees, or at least drove them from their hives, caused mares to miscarry, and so forth. Similarly, in various parts of Europe, it is still believed that if a woman in her courses enters a brewery the beer will turn sour; if she touches beer, wine, vinegar, or milk, it will go bad; if she makes jam, it will not keep; if she mounts a mare, it will miscarry; if she touches buds, they will wither; if she climbs a cherry tree, it will die. In Brunswick people think that if a menstruous woman assists at the killing of a pig, the pork will putrefy. In the Greek island of Calymnos a woman at such times may not go to the well to draw water, nor cross a running stream, nor enter the sea. Her presence in a boat is said to raise storms.

Thus the object of secluding women at menstruation is to neutralise the dangerous influences which are supposed to emanate from them at such times. That the danger is believed to be especially great at the first menstruation appears from the unusual precautions taken to isolate girls at this crisis. Two of these precautions have been illustrated above, namely, the rules that the girls may not touch the ground nor see the sun. The general effect of these rules is to keep her suspended, so to say, between heaven and earth. Whether enveloped in her hammock and slung up to the roof, as in South America, or raised above the ground in a dark and narrow cage, as in New Ireland, she may be considered to be out of the way of doing mischief, since, being shut off both from the earth and from the sun, she can poison neither of these great sources of life by her deadly contagion. In short, she is rendered harmless by being, in electrical language, insulated. But the precautions thus taken to isolate or insulate the girl are dictated by a regard for her own safety as well as for the safety of others. For it is thought that she herself would

suffer if she were to neglect the prescribed regimen. Thus Zulu girls, as we have seen, believe that they would shrivel to skeletons if the sun were to shine on them at puberty, and the Macusis imagine that, if a young woman were to transgress the rules, she would suffer from sores on various parts of her body. In short, the girl is viewed as charged with a powerful force which, if not kept within bounds, may prove destructive both to herself and to all with whom she comes in contact. To repress this force within the limits necessary for the safety of all concerned is the object of the taboos in question.

The same explanation applies to the observance of the same rules by divine kings and priests. The uncleanness, as it is called, of girls at puberty and the sanctity of holy men do not, to the primitive mind, differ materially from each other. They are only different manifestations of the same mysterious energy which, like energy in general, is in itself neither good nor bad, but becomes beneficent or maleficent according to its application. Accordingly, if, like girls at puberty, divine personages may neither touch the ground nor see the sun, the reason is, on the one hand, a fear lest their divinity might, at contact with earth or heaven, discharge itself with fatal violence on either; and, on the other hand, an apprehension that the divine being, thus drained of his ethereal virtue, might thereby be incapacitated for the future performance of those magical functions, upon the proper discharge of which the safety of the people and even of the world is believed to hang. Thus the rules in question fall under the head of the taboos which we examined in an earlier part of this book; they are intended to preserve the life of the divine person and with it the life of his subjects and worshippers. Nowhere, it is thought, can his precious yet dangerous life be at once so safe and so harmless as when it is neither in heaven nor in earth, but, as far as possible, suspended between the two.

CHAPTER LXI

THE MYTH OF BALDER

A DEITY whose life might in a sense be said to be neither in heaven nor on earth but between the two, was the Norse Balder, the good and beautiful god, the son of the great god Odin, and himself the wisest, mildest, best beloved of all the immortals. The story of his death, as it is told in the younger or prose *Edda*, runs thus. Once on a time Balder dreamed heavy dreams which seemed to forebode his death. Thereupon the gods held a council and resolved to make him secure against every danger. So the goddess Frigg took an oath from fire and water, iron and all metals, stones and earth, from trees, sicknesses and poisons, and from all four-footed beasts, birds, and creeping things, that they would not hurt Balder. When this was done Balder was

deemed invulnerable; so the gods amused themselves by setting him in their midst, while some shot at him, others hewed at him, and others threw stones at him. But whatever they did, nothing could hurt him; and at this they were all glad. Only Loki, the mischief-maker, was displeased, and he went in the guise of an old woman to Frigg, who told him that the weapons of the gods could not wound Balder, since she had made them all swear not to hurt him. Then Loki asked, "Have all things sworn to spare Balder?" She answered, "East of Walhalla grows a plant called mistletoe; it seemed to me too young to swear." So Loki went and pulled the mistletoe and took it to the assembly of the gods. There he found the blind god Hother standing at the outside of the circle. Loki asked him, "Why do you not shoot at Balder?" Hother answered, "Because I do not see where he stands; besides I have no weapon." Then said Loki, "Do like the rest and show Balder honour, as they all do. I will show you where he stands, and do you shoot at him with this twig." Hother took the mistletoe and threw it at Balder, as Loki directed him. The mistletoe struck Balder and pierced him through and through, and he fell down dead. And that was the greatest misfortune that ever befell gods and men. For a while the gods stood speechless, then they lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. They took Balder's body and brought it to the sea-shore. There stood Balder's ship; it was called Ringhorn, and was the hugest of all ships. The gods wished to launch the ship and to burn Balder's body on it, but the ship would not stir. So they sent for a giantess called Hyrrockin. She came riding on a wolf and gave the ship such a push that fire flashed from the rollers and all the earth shook. Then Balder's body was taken and placed on the funeral pile upon his ship. When his wife Nanna saw that, her heart burst for sorrow and she died. So she was laid on the funeral pile with her husband, and fire was put to it. Balder's horse, too, with all its trappings, was burned on the pile.

Whether he was a real or merely a mythical personage, Balder was worshipped in Norway. On one of the bays of the beautiful Sogne Fiord, which penetrates far into the depths of the solemn Norwegian mountains, with their sombre pine-forests and their lofty cascades dissolving into spray before they reach the dark water of the fiord far below, Balder had a great sanctuary. It was called Balder's Grove. A palisade enclosed the hallowed ground, and within it stood a spacious temple with the images of many gods, but none of them was worshipped with such devotion as Balder. So great was the awe with which the heathen regarded the place that no man might harm another there, nor steal his cattle, nor defile himself with women. But women cared for the images of the gods in the temple; they warmed them at the fire, anointed them with oil, and dried them with cloths.

Whatever may be thought of an historical kernel underlying a mythical husk in the legend of Balder, the details of the story suggest that it belongs to that class of myths which have been dramatised in ritual, or, to put it otherwise, which have been performed as

magical ceremonies for the sake of producing those natural effects which they describe in figurative language. A myth is never so graphic and precise in its details as when it is, so to speak, the book of the words which are spoken and acted by the performers of the sacred rite. That the Norse story of Balder was a myth of this sort will become probable if we can prove that ceremonies resembling the incidents in the tale have been performed by Norsemen and other European peoples. Now the main incidents in the tale are two—first, the pulling of the mistletoe, and second, the death and burning of the god; and both of them may perhaps be found to have had their counterparts in yearly rites observed, whether separately or conjointly, by people in various parts of Europe. These rites will be described and discussed in the following chapters. We shall begin with the annual festivals of fire and shall reserve the pulling of the mistletoe for consideration later on.

CHAPTER LXII

THE FIRE-FESTIVALS OF EUROPE

§ 1. *The Fire-festivals in general.*—All over Europe the peasants have been accustomed from time immemorial to kindle bonfires on certain days of the year, and to dance round or leap over them. Customs of this kind can be traced back on historical evidence to the Middle Ages, and their analogy to similar customs observed in antiquity goes with strong internal evidence to prove that their origin must be sought in a period long prior to the spread of Christianity. Indeed the earliest proof of their observance in Northern Europe is furnished by the attempts made by Christian synods in the eighth century to put them down as heathenish rites. Not uncommonly effigies are burned in these fires, or a pretence is made of burning a living person in them; and there are grounds for believing that anciently human beings were actually burned on these occasions. A brief view of the customs in question will bring out the traces of human sacrifice, and will serve at the same time to throw light on their meaning.

The seasons of the year when these bonfires are most commonly lit are spring and midsummer; but in some places they are kindled also at the end of autumn or during the course of the winter, particularly on Hallow E'en (the thirty-first of October), Christmas Day, and the Eve of Twelfth Day. Space forbids me to describe all these festivals at length; a few specimens must serve to illustrate their general character. We shall begin with the fire-festivals of spring, which usually fall on the first Sunday of Lent (*Quadragesima* or *Invocavit*), Easter Eve, and May Day.

§ 2. *The Lenten Fires.*—The custom of kindling bonfires on the first Sunday in Lent has prevailed in Belgium, the north of France, and many parts of Germany Thus in the Belgian Ardennes for a week

or a fortnight before the "day of the great fire," as it is called, children go about from farm to farm collecting fuel. At Grand Halleux any one who refuses their request is pursued next day by the children, who try to blacken his face with the ashes of the extinct fire. When the day has come, they cut down bushes, especially juniper and broom, and in the evening great bonfires blaze on all the heights. It is a common saying that seven bonfires should be seen if the village is to be safe from conflagrations. If the Meuse happens to be frozen hard at the time, bonfires are lit also on the ice. At Grand Halleux they set up a pole called *makral*, or "the witch," in the midst of the pile, and the fire is kindled by the man who was last married in the village. In the neighbourhood of Morlanwelz a straw man is burnt in the fire. Young people and children dance and sing round the bonfires, and leap over the embers to secure good crops or a happy marriage within the year, or as a means of guarding themselves against colic. In Brabant on the same Sunday, down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, women and men disguised in female attire used to go with burning torches to the fields, where they danced and sang comic songs for the purpose, as they alleged, of driving away "the wicked sower," who is mentioned in the Gospel for the day. At Pâturages, in the province of Hainaut, down to about 1840 the custom was observed under the name of *Escouvion* or *Scouvion*. Every year on the first Sunday of Lent, which was called the Day of the Little Scouvion, young folks and children used to run with lighted torches through the gardens and orchards. As they ran they cried at the pitch of their voices:

"Bear apples, bear pears, and cherries all black
To Scouvion!"

At these words the torch-bearer whirled his blazing brand and hurled it among the branches of the apple-trees, the pear-trees, and the cherry-trees. The next Sunday was called the Day of the Great Scouvion, and the same race with lighted torches among the trees of the orchards was repeated in the afternoon till darkness fell.

In the French department of the Ardennes the whole village used to dance and sing around the bonfires which were lighted on the first Sunday in Lent. Here, too, it was the person last married, sometimes a man and sometimes a woman, who put the match to the fire. The custom is still kept up very commonly in the district. Cats used to be burnt in the fire or roasted to death by being held over it; and while they were burning the shepherds drove their flocks through the smoke and flames as a sure means of guarding them against sickness and witchcraft. In some communes it was believed that the livelier the dance round the fire, the better would be the crops that year.

In the French province of Franche-Comté, to the west of the Jura Mountains, the first Sunday of Lent is known as the Sunday of the Firebrands (*Brandons*), on account of the fires which it is customary to kindle on that day. On the Saturday or the Sunday the village

lads harness themselves to a cart and drag it about the streets, stopping at the doors of the houses where there are girls and begging for a faggot. When they have got enough, they cart the fuel to a spot at some little distance from the village, pile it up, and set it on fire. All the people of the parish come out to see the bonfire. In some villages, when the bells have rung the Angelus, the signal for the observance is given by cries of, "To the fire! to the fire!" Lads, lasses, and children dance round the blaze, and when the flames have died down they vie with each other in leaping over the red embers. He or she who does so without singeing his or her garments will be married within the year. Young folk also carry lighted torches about the streets or the fields, and when they pass an orchard they cry out, "More fruit than leaves!" Down to recent years at Laviron, in the department of Doubs, it was the young married couples of the year who had charge of the bonfires. In the midst of the bonfire a pole was planted with a wooden figure of a cock fastened to the top. Then there were races, and the winner received the cock as a prize.

In Auvergne fires are everywhere kindled on the evening of the first Sunday in Lent. Every village, every hamlet, even every ward, every isolated farm has its bonfire or *figo*, as it is called, which blazes up as the shades of night are falling. The fires may be seen flaring on the heights and in the plains; the people dance and sing round about them and leap through the flames. Then they proceed to the ceremony of the *Grannas-mias*. A *granno-mio* is a torch of straw fastened to the top of a pole. When the pyre is half consumed, the bystanders kindle the torches at the expiring flames and carry them into the neighbouring orchards, fields, and gardens, wherever there are fruit-trees. As they march they sing at the top of their voices, "Granno my friend, Granno my father, Granno my mother." Then they pass the burning torches under the branches of every tree, singing:

"Brando, brandounci tsaque brantso, in plan panei!"

that is, "Firebrand burn; every branch a basketful!" In some villages the people also run across the sown fields and shake the ashes of the torches on the ground; also they put some of the ashes in the fowls' nests, in order that the hens may lay plenty of eggs throughout the year. When all these ceremonies have been performed, everybody goes home and feasts; the special dishes of the evening are fritters and pancakes. Here the application of the fire to the fruit-trees, to the sown fields, and to the nests of the poultry is clearly a charm intended to ensure fertility; and the Granno to whom the invocations are addressed, and who gives his name to the torches, may possibly be, as Dr. Pommerol suggests, no other than the ancient Celtic god Grannus, whom the Romans identified with Apollo, and whose worship is attested by inscriptions found not only in France but in Scotland and on the Danube.

The custom of carrying lighted torches of straw (*brandons*) about the orchards and fields to fertilise them on the first Sunday of Lent

seems to have been common in France, whether it was accompanied with the practice of kindling bonfires or not. Thus in the province of Picardy "on the first Sunday of Lent people carried torches through the fields, exorcising the field-mice, the darnel, and the smut. They imagined that they did much good to the gardens and caused the onions to grow large. Children ran about the fields, torch in hand, to make the land more fertile." At Verges, a village between the Jura and the Combe d'Ain, the torches at this season were kindled on the top of a mountain, and the bearers went to every house in the village, demanding roasted peas and obliging all couples who had been married within the year to dance. In Berry, a district of Central France, it appears that bonfires are not lighted on this day, but when the sun has set the whole population of the villages, armed with blazing torches of straw, disperse over the country and scour the fields, the vineyards, and the orchards. Seen from afar, the multitude of moving lights, twinkling in the darkness, appear like will-o'-the-wisps chasing each other across the plains, along the hillsides, and down the valleys. While the men wave their flambeaus about the branches of the fruit-trees, the women and children tie bands of wheaten-straw round the tree-trunks. The effect of the ceremony is supposed to be to avert the various plagues from which the fruits of the earth are apt to suffer; and the bands of straw fastened round the stems of the trees are believed to render them fruitful.

In Germany, Austria, and Switzerland at the same season similar customs have prevailed. Thus in the Eifel Mountains, Rhenish Prussia, on the first Sunday in Lent young people used to collect straw and brushwood from house to house. These they carried to an eminence and piled up round a tall, slim beech-tree, to which a piece of wood was fastened at right angles to form a cross. The structure was known as the "hut" or "castle." Fire was set to it and the young people marched round the blazing "castle" bare-headed, each carrying a lighted torch and praying aloud. Sometimes a straw-man was burned in the "hut." People observed the direction in which the smoke blew from the fire. If it blew towards the corn-fields, it was a sign that the harvest would be abundant. On the same day, in some parts of the Eifel, a great wheel was made of straw and dragged by three horses to the top of the hill. Thither the village boys marched at nightfall, set fire to the wheel, and sent it rolling down the slope. At Oberstattfeld the wheel had to be provided by the young man who was last married. About Echternach in Luxemburg the same ceremony is called "burning the witch." At Voralberg in the Tyrol, on the first Sunday in Lent, a slender young fir-tree is surrounded with a pile of straw and firewood. To the top of the tree is fastened a human figure called the "witch," made of old clothes and stuffed with gunpowder. At night the whole is set on fire and boys and girls dance round it, swinging torches and singing rhymes in which the words "corn in the winnowing-basket, the plough in the earth" may be distinguished. In Swabia on the first Sunday in Lent a figure

called the "witch" or the "old wife" or "winter's grandmother" is made up of clothes and fastened to a pole. This is stuck in the middle of a pile of wood, to which fire is applied. While the "witch" is burning, the young people throw blazing discs into the air. The discs are thin round pieces of wood, a few inches in diameter, with notched edges to imitate the rays of the sun or stars. They have a hole in the middle, by which they are attached to the end of a wand. Before the disc is thrown it is set on fire, the wand is swung to and fro, and the impetus thus communicated to the disc is augmented by dashing the rod sharply against a sloping board. The burning disc is thus thrown off, and mounting high into the air, describes a long fiery curve before it reaches the ground. The charred embers of the burned "witch" and discs are taken home and planted in the flax-fields the same night, in the belief that they will keep vermin from the fields. In the Rhön Mountains, situated on the borders of Hesse and Bavaria, the people used to march to the top of a hill or eminence on the first Sunday in Lent. Children and lads carried torches, brooms daubed with tar, and poles swathed in straw. A wheel, wrapt in combustibles, was kindled and rolled down the hill; and the young people rushed about the fields with their burning torches and brooms, till at last they flung them in a heap, and standing round them, struck up a hymn or a popular song. The object of running about the fields with the blazing torches was to "drive away the wicked sower." Or it was done in honour of the Virgin, that she might preserve the fruits of the earth throughout the year and bless them. In neighbouring villages of Hesse, between the Rhön and the Vogel Mountains, it is thought that wherever the burning wheels roll, the fields will be safe from hail and storm.

In Switzerland, also, it is or used to be customary to kindle bonfires on high places on the evening of the first Sunday in Lent, and the day is therefore popularly known as Spark Sunday. The custom prevailed, for example, throughout the canton of Lucerne. Boys went about from house to house begging for wood and straw, then piled the fuel on a conspicuous mountain or hill round about a pole, which bore a straw effigy called "the witch." At nightfall the pile was set on fire, and the young folks danced wildly round it, some of them cracking whips or ringing bells; and when the fire burned low enough, they leaped over it. This was called "burning the witch." In some parts of the canton also they used to wrap old wheels in straw and thorns, put a light to them, and send them rolling and blazing down hill. The more bonfires could be seen sparkling and flaring in the darkness, the more fruitful was the year expected to be; and the higher the dancers leaped beside or over the fire, the higher, it was thought, would grow the flax. In some districts it was the last married man or woman who must kindle the bonfire.

It seems hardly possible to separate from these bonfires, kindled on the first Sunday in Lent, the fires in which, about the same season, the effigy called Death is burned as part of the ceremony of "carrying

out Death." We have seen that at Spachendorf, in Austrian Silesia, on the morning of Rupert's Day (Shrove Tuesday?), a straw-man, dressed in a fur coat and a fur cap, is laid in a hole outside the village and there burned, and that while it is blazing every one seeks to snatch a fragment of it, which he fastens to a branch of the highest tree in his garden or buries in his field, believing that this will make the crops to grow better. The ceremony is known as the "burying of Death." Even when the straw-man is not designated as Death, the meaning of the observance is probably the same; for the name Death, as I have tried to show, does not express the original intention of the ceremony. At Cobern in the Eifel Mountains the lads make up a straw-man on Shrove Tuesday. The effigy is formally tried and accused of having perpetrated all the thefts that have been committed in the neighbourhood throughout the year. Being condemned to death, the straw-man is led through the village, shot, and burned upon a pyre. They dance round the blazing pile, and the last bride must leap over it. In Oldenburg on the evening of Shrove Tuesday people used to make long bundles of straw, which they set on fire, and then ran about the fields waving them, shrieking, and singing wild songs. Finally they burned a straw-man on the field. In the district of Düsseldorf the straw-man burned on Shrove Tuesday was made of an unthreshed sheaf of corn. On the first Monday after the spring equinox the urchins of Zurich drag a straw-man on a little cart through the streets, while at the same time the girls carry about a May-tree. When vespers ring, the straw-man is burned. In the district of Aachen on Ash Wednesday, a man used to be encased in peas-straw and taken to an appointed place. Here he slipped quietly out of his straw casing, which was then burned, the children thinking that it was the man who was being burned. In the Val di Ledro (Tyrol) on the last day of the Carnival a figure is made up of straw and brushwood and then burned. The figure is called the Old Woman, and the ceremony "burning the Old Woman."

§ 3. *The Easter Fires.*—Another occasion on which these fire-festivals are held is Easter Eve, the Saturday before Easter Sunday. On that day it has been customary in Catholic countries to extinguish all the lights in the churches, and then to make a new fire, sometimes with flint and steel, sometimes with a burning-glass. At this fire is lit the great Paschal or Easter candle, which is then used to rekindle all the extinguished lights in the church. In many parts of Germany a bonfire is also kindled, by means of the new fire, on some open space near the church. It is consecrated, and the people bring sticks of oak, walnut, and beech, which they char in the fire, and then take home with them. Some of these charred sticks are thereupon burned at home in a newly-kindled fire, with a prayer that God will preserve the homestead from fire, lightning, and hail. Thus every house receives "new fire." Some of the sticks are kept throughout the year and laid on the hearth-fire during heavy thunder-storms to prevent the house from being struck by lightning, or they are inserted

in the roof with the like intention. Others are placed in the fields, gardens, and meadows, with a prayer that God will keep them from blight and hail. Such fields and gardens are thought to thrive more than others; the corn and the plants that grow in them are not beaten down by hail, nor devoured by mice, vermin, and beetles; no witch harms them, and the ears of corn stand close and full. The charred sticks are also applied to the plough. The ashes of the Easter bonfire, together with the ashes of the consecrated palm-branches, are mixed with the seed at sowing. A wooden figure called Judas is sometimes burned in the consecrated bonfire, and even where this custom has been abolished the bonfire itself in some places goes by the name of "the burning of Judas."

The essentially pagan character of the Easter fire festival appears plainly both from the mode in which it is celebrated by the peasants and from the superstitious beliefs which they associate with it. All over Northern and Central Germany, from Altmark and Anhalt on the east, through Brunswick, Hanover, Oldenburg, the Harz district, and Hesse to Westphalia the Easter bonfires still blaze simultaneously on the hill-tops. As many as forty may sometimes be counted within sight at once. Long before Easter the young people have been busy collecting firewood; every farmer contributes, and tar-barrels, petroleum cases, and so forth go to swell the pile. Neighbouring villages vie with each other as to which shall send up the greatest blaze. The fires are always kindled, year after year, on the same hill, which accordingly often takes the name of Easter Mountain. It is a fine spectacle to watch from some eminence the bonfires flaring up one after another on the neighbouring heights. As far as their light reaches, so far, in the belief of the peasants, the fields will be fruitful, and the houses on which they shine will be safe from conflagration or sickness. At Volkmarsen and other places in Hesse the people used to observe which way the wind blew the flames, and then they sowed flax seed in that direction, confident that it would grow well. Brands taken from the bonfires preserve houses from being struck by lightning; and the ashes increase the fertility of the fields, protect them from mice, and mixed with the drinking-water of cattle make the animals thrive and ensure them against plague. As the flames die down, young and old leap over them, and cattle are sometimes driven through the smouldering embers. In some places tar-barrels or wheels wrapt in straw used to be set on fire, and then sent rolling down the hillside. In others the boys light torches and wisps of straw at the bonfires and rush about brandishing them in their hands.

In Münsterland these Easter fires are always kindled upon certain definite hills, which are hence known as Easter or Paschal Mountains. The whole community assembles about the fire. The young men and maidens, singing Easter hymns, march round and round the fire, till the blaze dies down. Then the girls jump over the fire in a line, one after the other, each supported by two young men who hold her hands and run beside her. In the twilight boys with blazing bundles of straw

run over the fields to make them fruitful. At Delmenhorst, in Oldenburg, it used to be the custom to cut down two trees, plant them in the ground side by side, and pile twelve tar-barrels against each. Brushwood was then heaped about the trees, and on the evening of Easter Saturday the boys, after rushing about with blazing bean-poles in their hands, set fire to the whole. At the end of the ceremony the urchins tried to blacken each other and the clothes of grown-up people. In the Altmark it is believed that as far as the blaze of the Easter bonfire is visible, the corn will grow well throughout the year, and no conflagration will break out. At Braunröde, in the Harz Mountains, it was the custom to burn squirrels in the Easter bonfire. In the Altmark, bones were burned in it.

Near Forchheim, in Upper Franken, a straw-man called the Judas used to be burned in the churchyards on Easter Saturday. The whole village contributed wood to the pyre on which he perished, and the charred sticks were afterwards kept and planted in the fields on Walpurgis Day (the first of May) to preserve the wheat from blight and mildew. About a hundred years ago or more the custom at Althenneberg, in Upper Bavaria, used to be as follows. On the afternoon of Easter Saturday the lads collected wood, which they piled in a cornfield, while in the middle of the pile they set up a tall wooden cross all swathed in straw. After the evening service they lighted their lanterns at the consecrated candle in the church, and ran with them at full speed to the pyre, each striving to get there first. The first to arrive set fire to the heap. No woman or girl might come near the bonfire, but they were allowed to watch it from a distance. As the flames rose the men and lads rejoiced and made merry, shouting, "We are burning the Judas!" The man who had been the first to reach the pyre and to kindle it was rewarded on Easter Sunday by the women, who gave him coloured eggs at the church door. The object of the whole ceremony was to keep off the hail. At other villages of Upper Bavaria the ceremony, which took place between nine and ten at night on Easter Saturday, was called "burning the Easter Man." On a height about a mile from the village the young fellows set up a tall cross enveloped in straw, so that it looked like a man with his arms stretched out. This was the Easter Man. No lad under eighteen years of age might take part in the ceremony. One of the young men stationed himself beside the Easter Man, holding in his hand a consecrated taper which he had brought from the church and lighted. The rest stood at equal intervals in a great circle round the cross. At a given signal they raced thrice round the circle, and then at a second signal ran straight at the cross and at the lad with the lighted taper beside it; the one who reached the goal first had the right of setting fire to the Easter Man. Great was the jubilation while he was burning. When he had been consumed in the flames, three lads were chosen from among the rest, and each of the three drew a circle on the ground with a stick thrice round the ashes. Then they all left the spot. On Easter Monday the villagers gathered the ashes

and strewed them on their fields; also they planted in the fields palm-branches which had been consecrated on Palm Sunday, and sticks which had been charred and hallowed on Good Friday, all for the purpose of protecting their fields against showers of hail. In some parts of Swabia the Easter fires might not be kindled with iron or steel or flint, but only by the friction of wood.

The custom of the Easter fires appears to have prevailed all over Central and Western Germany from north to south. We find it also in Holland, where the fires were kindled on the highest eminences, and the people danced round them and leaped through the flames or over the glowing embers. Here too, as often in Germany, the materials for the bonfire were collected by the young folk from door to door. In many parts of Sweden firearms are discharged in all directions on Easter Eve, and huge bonfires are lighted on hills and eminences. Some people think that the intention is to keep off the Troll and other evil spirits who are especially active at this season.

§ 4. *The Beltane Fires.*—In the Central Highlands of Scotland bonfires, known as the Beltane fires, were formerly kindled with great ceremony on the first of May, and the traces of human sacrifices at them were particularly clear and unequivocal. The custom of lighting the bonfires lasted in various places far into the eighteenth century, and the descriptions of the ceremony by writers of that period present such a curious and interesting picture of ancient heathendom surviving in our own country that I will reproduce them in the words of their authors. The fullest of the descriptions is the one bequeathed to us by John Ramsay, laird of Ochtertyre, near Crieff, the patron of Burns and the friend of Sir Walter Scott. He says: "But the most considerable of the Druidical festivals is that of Beltane, or May-day, which was lately observed in some parts of the Highlands with extraordinary ceremonies. . . . Like the other public worship of the Druids, the Beltane feast seems to have been performed on hills or eminences. They thought it degrading to him whose temple is the universe, to suppose that he would dwell in any house made with hands. Their sacrifices were therefore offered in the open air, frequently upon the tops of hills, where they were presented with the grandest views of nature, and were nearest the seat of warmth and order. And, according to tradition, such was the manner of celebrating this festival in the Highlands within the last hundred years. But since the decline of superstition, it has been celebrated by the people of each hamlet on some hill or rising ground around which their cattle were pasturing. Thither the young folks repaired in the morning, and cut a trench, on the summit of which a seat of turf was formed for the company. And in the middle a pile of wood or other fuel was placed, which of old they kindled with *tein-eigin—i.e.*, forced-fire or *need-fire*. Although, for many years past, they have been contented with common fire, yet we shall now describe the process, because it will hereafter appear that recourse is still had to the *tein-eigin* upon extraordinary emergencies.

"The night before, all the fires in the country were carefully extinguished, and next morning the materials for exciting this sacred fire were prepared. The most primitive method seems to be that which was used in the islands of Skye, Mull, and Tiree. A well-seasoned plank of oak was procured, in the midst of which a hole was bored. A wimble of the same timber was then applied, the end of which they fitted to the hole. But in some parts of the mainland the machinery was different. They used a frame of green wood, of a square form, in the centre of which was an axle-tree. In some places three times three persons, in others three times nine, were required for turning round by turns the axle-tree or wimble. If any of them had been guilty of murder, adultery, theft, or other atrocious crime, it was imagined either that the fire would not kindle, or that it would be devoid of its usual virtue. So soon as any sparks were emitted by means of the violent friction, they applied a species of agaric which grows on old birch-trees, and is very combustible. This fire had the appearance of being immediately derived from heaven, and manifold were the virtues ascribed to it. They esteemed it a preservative against witchcraft, and a sovereign remedy against malignant diseases, both in the human species and in cattle; and by it the strongest poisons were supposed to have their nature changed.

"After kindling the bonfire with the *tein-eigin* the company prepared their victuals. And as soon as they had finished their meal, they amused themselves a while in singing and dancing round the fire. Towards the close of the entertainment, the person who officiated as master of the feast produced a large cake baked with eggs and scalloped round the edge, called *am bonnach beal-tine—i.e.,* the Beltane cake. It was divided into a number of pieces, and distributed in great form to the company. There was one particular piece which whoever got was called *cailleach beal-tine—i.e.,* the Beltane *carline,* a term of great reproach. Upon his being known, part of the company laid hold of him and made a show of putting him into the fire; but the majority interposing, he was rescued. And in some places they laid him flat on the ground, making as if they would quarter him. Afterwards, he was pelted with egg-shells, and retained the odious appellation during the whole year. And while the feast was fresh in people's memory, they affected to speak of the *cailleach beal-tine* as dead."

In the parish of Callander, a beautiful district of Western Perthshire, the Beltane custom was still in vogue towards the end of the eighteenth century. It has been described as follows by the parish minister of the time: "Upon the first day of May, which is called *Beltan,* or *Baltein* day, all the boys in a township or hamlet, meet in the moors. They cut a table in the green sod, of a round figure, by casting a trench in the ground, of such circumference as to hold the whole company. They kindle a fire, and dress a repast of eggs and milk in the consistence of a custard. They knead a cake of oatmeal, which is toasted at the embers against a stone. After the custard is eaten up, they divide the cake into so many portions, as similar as possible to one

another in size and shape, as there are persons in the company. They daub one of these portions all over with charcoal, until it be perfectly black. They put all the bits of the cake into a bonnet. Every one, blindfold, draws out a portion. He who holds the bonnet, is entitled to the last bit. Whoever draws the black bit, is the *devoted* person who is to be sacrificed to *Baal,* whose favour they mean to implore, in rendering the year productive of the sustenance of man and beast. There is little doubt of these inhuman sacrifices having been once offered in this country, as well as in the east, although they now pass from the act of sacrificing, and only compel the *devoted* person to leap three times through the flames; with which the ceremonies of this festival are closed."

Thomas Pennant, who travelled in Perthshire in the year 1769, tells us that "on the first of May, the herdsmen of every village hold their Bel-tien, a rural sacrifice. They cut a square trench on the ground, leaving the turf in the middle; on that they make a fire of wood, on which they dress a large caudle of eggs, butter, oatmeal and milk; and bring besides the ingredients of the caudle, plenty of beer and whisky; for each of the company must contribute something. The rites begin with spilling some of the caudle on the ground, by way of libation: on that every one takes a cake of oatmeal, upon which are raised nine square knobs, each dedicated to some particular being, the supposed preserver of their flocks and herds, or to some particular animal, the real destroyer of them: each person then turns his face to the fire, breaks off a knob, and flinging it over his shoulders, says, 'This I give to thee, preserve thou my horses; this to thee, preserve thou my sheep; and so on.' After that, they use the same ceremony to the noxious animals: 'This I give to thee, O fox! spare thou my lambs; this to thee, O hooded crow! this to thee, O eagle!' When the ceremony is over, they dine on the caudle; and after the feast is finished, what is left is hid by two persons deputed for that purpose; but on the next Sunday they reassemble, and finish the reliques of the first entertainment."

Another writer of the eighteenth century has described the Beltane festival as it was held in the parish of Logierait in Perthshire. He says: "On the first of May, O.S., a festival called *Beltan* is annually held here. It is chiefly celebrated by the cow-herds, who assemble by scores in the fields, to dress a dinner for themselves, of boiled milk and eggs. These dishes they eat with a sort of cakes baked for the occasion, and having small lumps in the form of *nipples,* raised all over the surface." In this last account no mention is made of bonfires, but they were probably lighted, for a contemporary writer informs us that in the parish of Kirkmichael, which adjoins the parish of Logierait on the east, the custom of lighting a fire in the fields and baking a consecrated cake on the first of May was not quite obsolete in his time. We may conjecture that the cake with knobs was formerly used for the purpose of determining who should be the "Beltane carline" or victim doomed to the flames. A trace of this custom

survived, perhaps, in the custom of baking oatmeal cakes of a special kind and rolling them down hill about noon on the first of May; for it was thought that the person whose cake broke as it rolled would die or be unfortunate within the year. These cakes, or bannocks as we call them in Scotland, were baked in the usual way, but they were washed over with a thin batter composed of whipped egg, milk or cream, and a little oatmeal. This custom appears to have prevailed at or near Kingussie in Inverness-shire.

In the north-east of Scotland the Beltane fires were still kindled in the latter half of the eighteenth century; the herdsmen of several farms used to gather dry wood, kindle it, and dance three times "southways" about the burning pile. But in this region, according to a later authority, the Beltane fires were lit not on the first but on the second of May, Old Style. They were called bone-fires. The people believed that on that evening and night the witches were abroad and busy casting spells on cattle and stealing cows' milk. To counteract their machinations, pieces of rowan-tree and woodbine, but especially of rowan-tree, were placed over the doors of the cow-houses, and fires were kindled by every farmer and cottar. Old thatch, straw, furze, or broom was piled in a heap and set on fire a little after sunset. While some of the bystanders kept tossing the blazing mass, others hoisted portions of it on pitchforks or poles and ran hither and thither, holding them as high as they could. Meantime the young people danced round the fire or ran through the smoke shouting, "Fire! blaze and burn the witches; fire! fire! burn the witches." In some districts a large round cake of oat or barley meal was rolled through the ashes. When all the fuel was consumed, the people scattered the ashes far and wide, and till the night grew quite dark they continued to run through them, crying, "Fire! burn the witches."

In the Hebrides "the Beltane bannock is smaller than that made at St. Michael's, but is made in the same way; it is no longer made in Uist, but Father Allan remembers seeing his grandmother make one about twenty-five years ago. There was also a cheese made, generally on the first of May, which was kept to the next Beltane as a sort of charm against the bewitching of milk-produce. The Beltane customs seem to have been the same as elsewhere. Every fire was put out and a large one lit on the top of the hill, and the cattle driven round it sunwards (*dessil*), to keep off murrain all the year. Each man would take home fire wherewith to kindle his own."

In Wales also the custom of lighting Beltane fires at the beginning of May used to be observed, but the day on which they were kindled varied from the eve of May Day to the third of May. The flame was sometimes elicited by the friction of two pieces of oak, as appears from the following description. "The fire was done in this way. Nine men would turn their pockets inside out, and see that every piece of money and all metals were off their persons. Then the men went into the nearest woods, and collected sticks of nine different kinds of trees. These were carried to the spot where the fire had

to be built. There a circle was cut in the sod, and the sticks were set crosswise. All around the circle the people stood and watched the proceedings. One of the men would then take two bits of oak, and rub them together until a flame was kindled. This was applied to the sticks, and soon a large fire was made. Sometimes two fires were set up side by side. These fires, whether one or two, were called *coelcerth* or bonfire. Round cakes of oatmeal and brown meal were split in four, and placed in a small flour-bag, and everybody present had to pick out a portion. The last bit in the bag fell to the lot of the bag-holder. Each person who chanced to pick up a piece of brown-meal cake was compelled to leap three times over the flames, or to run thrice between the two fires, by which means the people thought they were sure of a plentiful harvest. Shouts and screams of those who had to face the ordeal could be heard ever so far, and those who chanced to pick the oatmeal portions sang and danced and clapped their hands in approval, as the holders of the brown bits leaped three times over the flames, or ran three times between the two fires."

The belief of the people that by leaping thrice over the bonfires or running thrice between them they ensured a plentiful harvest is worthy of note. The mode in which this result was supposed to be brought about is indicated by another writer on Welsh folk-lore, according to whom it used to be held that "the bonfires lighted in May or Midsummer protected the lands from sorcery, so that good crops would follow. The ashes were also considered valuable as charms." Hence it appears that the heat of the fires was thought to fertilise the fields, not directly by quickening the seeds in the ground, but indirectly by counteracting the baleful influence of witchcraft or perhaps by burning up the persons of the witches.

The Beltane fires seem to have been kindled also in Ireland, for Cormac, "or somebody in his name, says that *belltaine,* May-day, was so called from the 'lucky fire,' or the 'two fires,' which the druids of Erin used to make on that day with great incantations; and cattle, he adds, used to be brought to those fires, or to be driven between them, as a safeguard against the diseases of the year." The custom of driving cattle through or between fires on May Day or the eve of May Day persisted in Ireland down to a time within living memory.

The first of May is a great popular festival in the more midland and southern parts of Sweden. On the eve of the festival huge bonfires, which should be lighted by striking two flints together, blaze on all the hills and knolls. Every large hamlet has its own fire, round which the young people dance in a ring. The old folk notice whether the flames incline to the north or to the south. In the former case, the spring will be cold and backward; in the latter, it will be mild and genial. In Bohemia, on the eve of May Day, young people kindle fires on hills and eminences, at crossways, and in pastures, and dance round them. They leap over the glowing embers or even through the flames. The ceremony is called "burning the witches." In some

places an effigy representing a witch used to be burnt in the bonfire. We have to remember that the eve of May Day is the notorious Walpurgis Night, when the witches are everywhere speeding unseen through the air on their hellish errands. On this witching night children in Voigtland also light bonfires on the heights and leap over them. Moreover, they wave burning brooms or toss them into the air. So far as the light of the bonfire reaches, so far will a blessing rest on the fields. The kindling of the fires on Walpurgis Night is called "driving away the witches." The custom of kindling fires on the eve of May Day (Walpurgis Night) for the purpose of burning the witches is, or used to be, widespread in the Tyrol, Moravia, Saxony and Silesia.

§ 5. *The Midsummer Fires.*—But the season at which these fire-festivals have been most generally held all over Europe is the summer solstice, that is Midsummer Eve (the twenty-third of June) or Midsummer day (the twenty-fourth of June). A faint tinge of Christianity has been given to them by naming Midsummer Day after St. John the Baptist, but we cannot doubt that the celebration dates from a time long before the beginning of our era. The summer solstice, or Midsummer Day, is the great turning-point in the sun's career, when, after climbing higher and higher day by day in the sky, the luminary stops and thenceforth retraces his steps down the heavenly road. Such a moment could not but be regarded with anxiety by primitive man so soon as he began to observe and ponder the courses of the great lights across the celestial vault; and having still to learn his own powerlessness in face of the vast cyclic changes of nature, he may have fancied that he could help the sun in his seeming decline—could prop his failing steps and rekindle the sinking flame of the red lamp in his feeble hand. In some such thoughts as these the midsummer festivals of our European peasantry may perhaps have taken their rise. Whatever their origin, they have prevailed all over this quarter of the globe, from Ireland on the west to Russia on the east, and from Norway and Sweden on the north to Spain and Greece on the south. According to a mediæval writer, the three great features of the midsummer celebration were the bonfires, the procession with torches round the fields, and the custom of rolling a wheel. He tells us that boys burned bones and filth of various kinds to make a foul smoke, and that the smoke drove away certain noxious dragons which at this time, excited by the summer heat, copulated in the air and poisoned the wells and rivers by dropping their seed into them; and he explains the custom of trundling a wheel to mean that the sun, having now reached the highest point in the ecliptic, begins thenceforward to descend.

The main features of the midsummer fire-festival resemble those which we have found to characterise the vernal festivals of fire. The similarity of the two sets of ceremonies will plainly appear from the following examples.

A writer of the first half of the sixteenth century informs us that

in almost every village and town of Germany public bonfires were kindled on the Eve of St. John, and young and old, of both sexes, gathered about them and passed the time in dancing and singing. People on this occasion wore chaplets of mugwort and vervain, and they looked at the fire through bunches of larkspur which they held in their hands, believing that this would preserve their eyes in a healthy state throughout the year. As each departed, he threw the mugwort and vervain into the fire, saying, "May all my ill-luck depart and be burnt up with these." At Lower Konz, a village situated on a hillside overlooking the Moselle, the midsummer festival used to be celebrated as follows. A quantity of straw was collected on the top of the steep Stromberg Hill. Every inhabitant, or at least every householder, had to contribute his share of straw to the pile. At nightfall the whole male population, men and boys, mustered on the top of the hill; the women and girls were not allowed to join them, but had to take up their position at a certain spring half-way down the slope. On the summit stood a huge wheel completely encased in some of the straw which had been jointly contributed by the villagers; the rest of the straw was made into torches. From each side of the wheel the axle-tree projected about three feet, thus furnishing handles to the lads who were to guide it in its descent. The mayor of the neighbouring town of Sierck, who always received a basket of cherries for his services, gave the signal; a lighted torch was applied to the wheel, and as it burst into flame, two young fellows, strong-limbed and swift of foot, seized the handles and began running with it down the slope. A great shout went up. Every man and boy waved a blazing torch in the air, and took care to keep it alight so long as the wheel was trundling down the hill. The great object of the young men who guided the wheel was to plunge it blazing into the water of the Moselle; but they rarely succeeded in their efforts, for the vineyards which cover the greater part of the declivity impeded their progress, and the wheel was often burned out before it reached the river. As it rolled past the women and girls at the spring, they raised cries of joy which were answered by the men on the top of the mountain; and the shouts were echoed by the inhabitants of neighbouring villages who watched the spectacle from their hills on the opposite bank of the Moselle. If the fiery wheel was successfully conveyed to the bank of the river and extinguished in the water, the people looked for an abundant vintage that year, and the inhabitants of Konz had the right to exact a waggon-load of white wine from the surrounding vineyards. On the other hand, they believed that, if they neglected to perform the ceremony, the cattle would be attacked by giddiness and convulsions and would dance in their stalls.

Down at least to the middle of the nineteenth century the midsummer fires used to blaze all over Upper Bavaria. They were kindled especially on the mountains, but also far and wide in the lowlands, and we are told that in the darkness and stillness of night the moving

groups, lit up by the flickering glow of the flames, presented an impressive spectacle. Cattle were driven through the fire to cure the sick animals and to guard such as were sound against plague and harm of every kind throughout the year. Many a householder on that day put out the fire on the domestic hearth and rekindled it by means of a brand taken from the midsummer bonfire. The people judged of the height to which the flax would grow in the year by the height to which the flames of the bonfire rose; and whoever leaped over the burning pile was sure not to suffer from backache in reaping the corn at harvest. In many parts of Bavaria it was believed that the flax would grow as high as the young people leaped over the fire. In others the old folk used to plant three charred sticks from the bonfire in the fields, believing that this would make the flax grow tall. Elsewhere an extinguished brand was put in the roof of the house to protect it against fire. In the towns about Würzburg the bonfires used to be kindled in the market-places, and the young people who jumped over them wore garlands of flowers, especially of mugwort and vervain, and carried sprigs of larkspur in their hands. They thought that such as looked at the fire holding a bit of larkspur before their face would be troubled by no malady of the eyes throughout the year. Further, it was customary at Würzburg, in the sixteenth century, for the bishop's followers to throw burning discs of wood into the air from a mountain which overhangs the town. The discs were discharged by means of flexible rods, and in their flight through the darkness presented the appearance of fiery dragons.

Similarly in Swabia, lads and lasses, hand in hand, leap over the midsummer bonfire, praying that the hemp may grow three ells high, and they set fire to wheels of straw and send them rolling down the hill. Sometimes, as the people sprang over the midsummer bonfire they cried out, "Flax, flax! may the flax this year grow seven ells high!" At Rottenburg a rude effigy in human form, called the Angelman, used to be enveloped in flowers and then burnt in the midsummer fire by boys, who afterwards leaped over the glowing embers.

So in Baden the children collected fuel from house to house for the midsummer bonfire on St. John's Day; and lads and lasses leaped over the fire in couples. Here, as elsewhere, a close connexion was traced between these bonfires and the harvest. In some places it was thought that those who leaped over the fires would not suffer from backache at reaping. Sometimes, as the young folk sprang over the flames, they cried, "Grow, that the hemp may be three ells high!" This notion that the hemp or the corn would grow as high as the flames blazed or as the people jumped over them, seems to have been widespread in Baden. It was held that the parents of the young people who bounded highest over the fire would have the most abundant harvest; and on the other hand, if a man contributed nothing to the bonfire, it was imagined that there would be no blessing on his crops, and that his hemp in particular would never grow. At Edersleben, near Sangerhausen, a high pole was planted in the ground and a tar-

barrel was hung from it by a chain which reached to the ground. The barrel was then set on fire and swung round the pole amid shouts of joy.

In Denmark and Norway also midsummer fires were kindled on St. John's Eve on roads, open spaces, and hills. People in Norway thought that the fires banished sickness from among the cattle. Even yet the fires are said to be lighted all over Norway on Midsummer Eve. They are kindled in order to keep off the witches, who are said to be flying from all parts that night to the Blocksberg, where the big witch lives. In Sweden the Eve of St. John (St. Hans) is the most joyous night of the whole year. Throughout some parts of the country, especially in the provinces of Bohus and Scania and in districts bordering on Norway, it is celebrated by the frequent discharge of firearms and by huge bonfires, formerly called Balder's Balefires (*Balder's Bălar*), which are kindled at dusk on hills and eminences and throw a glare of light over the surrounding landscape. The people dance round the fires and leap over or through them. In parts of Norrland on St. John's Eve the bonfires are lit at the cross-roads. The fuel consists of nine different sorts of wood, and the spectators cast into the flames a kind of toad-stool (*Bäran*) in order to counteract the power of the Trolls and other evil spirits, who are believed to be abroad that night; for at that mystic season the mountains open and from their cavernous depths the uncanny crew pours forth to dance and disport themselves for a time. The peasants believe that should any of the Trolls be in the vicinity they will show themselves; and if an animal, for example a he or she goat, happens to be seen near the blazing, crackling pile, the peasants are firmly persuaded that it is no other than the Evil One in person. Further, it deserves to be remarked that in Sweden St. John's Eve is a festival of water as well as of fire; for certain holy springs are then supposed to be endowed with wonderful medicinal virtues, and many sick people resort to them for the healing of their infirmities.

In Austria the midsummer customs and superstitions resemble those of Germany. Thus in some parts of the Tyrol bonfires are kindled and burning discs hurled into the air. In the lower valley of the Inn a tatterdemalion effigy is carted about the village on Midsummer Day and then burned. He is called the *Lotter,* which has been corrupted into Luther. At Ambras, one of the villages where Martin Luther is thus burned in effigy, they say that if you go through the village between eleven and twelve on St. John's Night and wash yourself in three wells, you will see all who are to die in the following year. At Gratz on St. John's Eve (the twenty-third of June) the common people used to make a puppet called the *Tatermann,* which they dragged to the bleaching ground, and pelted with burning besoms till it took fire. At Reutte, in the Tyrol, people believed that the flax would grow as high as they leaped over the midsummer bonfire, and they took pieces of charred wood from the fire and stuck them in their flax-fields the same night, leaving them there till the flax harvest had been got in. In Lower Austria bonfires are kindled on the heights,

and the boys caper round them, brandishing lighted torches drenched in pitch. Whoever jumps thrice across the fire will not suffer from fever within the year. Cart-wheels are often smeared with pitch, ignited, and sent rolling and blazing down the hillsides.

All over Bohemia bonfires still burn on Midsummer Eve. In the afternoon boys go about with handcarts from house to house collecting fuel and threatening with evil consequences the curmudgeons who refuse them a dole. Sometimes the young men fell a tall straight fir in the woods and set it up on a height, where the girls deck it with nosegays, wreaths of leaves, and red ribbons. Then brushwood is piled about it, and at nightfall the whole is set on fire. While the flames break out, the young men climb the tree and fetch down the wreaths which the girls had placed on it. After that lads and lasses stand on opposite sides of the fire and look at one another through the wreaths to see whether they will be true to each other and marry within the year. Also the girls throw the wreaths across the flames to the men, and woe to the awkward swain who fails to catch the wreath thrown him by his sweetheart. When the blaze has died down, each couple takes hands and leaps thrice across the fire. He or she who does so will be free from ague throughout the year, and the flax will grow as high as the young folks leap. A girl who sees nine bonfires on Midsummer Eve will marry before the year is out. The singed wreaths are carried home and carefully preserved throughout the year. During thunderstorms a bit of the wreath is burned on the hearth with a prayer; some of it is given to kine that are sick or calving, and some of it serves to fumigate house and cattle-stall, that man and beast may keep hale and well. Sometimes an old cart-wheel is smeared with resin, ignited, and sent rolling down the hill. Often the boys collect all the worn-out besoms they can get hold of, dip them in pitch, and having set them on fire wave them about or throw them high into the air. Or they rush down the hillside in troops, brandishing the flaming brooms and shouting. The stumps of the brooms and embers from the fire are preserved and stuck in cabbage gardens to protect the cabbages from caterpillars and gnats. Some people insert charred sticks and ashes from the midsummer bonfire in their sown fields and meadows, in their gardens and the roofs of their houses, as a talisman against lightning and foul weather; or they fancy that the ashes placed in the roof will prevent any fire from breaking out in the house. In some districts they crown or gird themselves with mugwort while the midsummer fire is burning, for this is supposed to be a protection against ghosts, witches, and sickness; in particular, a wreath of mugwort is a sure preventive of sore eyes. Sometimes the girls look at the bonfires through garlands of wild flowers, praying the fire to strengthen their eyes and eyelids. She who does this thrice will have no sore eyes all that year. In some parts of Bohemia they used to drive the cows through the midsummer fire to guard them against witchcraft.

In Slavonic countries, also, the midsummer festival is celebrated

with similar rites. We have already seen that in Russia on the Eve of St. John young men and maidens jump over a bonfire in couples carrying a straw effigy of Kupalo in their arms. In some parts of Russia an image of Kupalo is burnt or thrown into a stream on St. John's Night. Again, in some districts of Russia the young folk wear garlands of flowers and girdles of holy herbs when they spring through the smoke or flames; and sometimes they drive the cattle also through the fire in order to protect the animals against wizards and witches, who are then ravenous after milk. In Little Russia a stake is driven into the ground on St. John's Night, wrapt in straw, and set on fire. As the flames rise the peasant women throw birchen boughs into them, saying, "May my flax be as tall as this bough!" In Ruthenia the bonfires are lighted by a flame procured by the friction of wood. While the elders of the party are engaged in thus "churning" the fire, the rest maintain a respectful silence; but when the flame bursts from the wood, they break forth into joyous songs. As soon as the bonfires are kindled, the young people take hands and leap in pairs through the smoke, it not through the flames; and after that the cattle in their turn are driven through the fire.

In many parts of Prussia and Lithuania great fires are kindled on Midsummer Eve. All the heights are ablaze with them, as far as the eye can see. The fires are supposed to be a protection against witchcraft, thunder, hail, and cattle disease, especially if next morning the cattle are driven over the places where the fires burned. Above all, the bonfires ensure the farmer against the arts of witches, who try to steal the milk from his cows by charms and spells. That is why next morning you may see the young fellows who lit the bonfire going from house to house and receiving jugfuls of milk. And for the same reason they stick burs and mugwort on the gate or the hedge through which the cows go to pasture, because that is supposed to be a preservative against witchcraft. In Masuren, a district of Eastern Prussia inhabited by a branch of the Polish family, it is the custom on the evening of Midsummer Day to put out all the fires in the village. Then an oaken stake is driven into the ground and a wheel is fixed on it as on an axle. This wheel the villagers, working by relays, cause to revolve with great rapidity till fire is produced by friction. Every one takes home a lighted brand from the new fire and with it rekindles the fire on the domestic hearth. In Serbia on Midsummer Eve herdsmen light torches of birch bark and march round the sheepfolds and cattle-stalls; then they climb the hills and there allow the torches to burn out.

Among the Magyars in Hungary the midsummer fire-festival is marked by the same features that meet us in so many parts of Europe. On Midsummer Eve in many places it is customary to kindle bonfires on heights and to leap over them, and from the manner in which the young people leap the bystanders predict whether they will marry soon. On this day also many Hungarian swineherds make fire by rotating a wheel round a wooden axle wrapt in hemp, and through the fire thus made they drive their pigs to preserve them from sickness.

The Esthonians of Russia, who, like the Magyars, belong to the great Turanian family of mankind, also celebrate the summer solstice in the usual way. They think that the St. John's fire keeps witches from the cattle, and they say that he who does not come to it will have his barley full of thistles and his oats full of weeds. In the Esthonian island of Oesel, while they throw fuel into the midsummer fire, they call out, "Weeds to the fire, flax to the field," or they fling three billets into the flames, saying, "Flax grow long!" And they take charred sticks from the bonfire home with them and keep them to make the cattle thrive. In some parts of the island the bonfire is formed by piling brushwood and other combustibles round a tree, at the top of which a flag flies. Whoever succeeds in knocking down the flag with a pole before it begins to burn will have good luck. Formerly the festivities lasted till daybreak, and ended in scenes of debauchery which looked doubly hideous by the growing light of a summer morning.

When we pass from the east to the west of Europe we still find the summer solstice celebrated with rites of the same general character. Down to about the middle of the nineteenth century the custom of lighting bonfires at midsummer prevailed so commonly in France that there was hardly a town or a village, we are told, where they were not kindled. People danced round and leaped over them, and took charred sticks from the bonfire home with them to protect the houses against lightning, conflagrations, and spells.

In Brittany, apparently, the custom of the midsummer bonfires is kept up to this day. When the flames have died down, the whole assembly kneels round about the bonfire and an old man prays aloud. Then they all rise and march thrice round the fire; at the third turn they stop and every one picks up a pebble and throws it on the burning pile. After that they disperse. In Brittany and Berry it is believed that a girl who dances round nine midsummer bonfires will marry within the year. In the valley of the Orne the custom was to kindle the bonfire just at the moment when the sun was about to dip below the horizon; and the peasants drove their cattle through the fires to protect them against witchcraft, especially against the spells of witches and wizards who attempted to steal the milk and butter. At Jumièges in Normandy, down to the first half of the nineteenth century, the midsummer festival was marked by certain singular features which bore the stamp of a very high antiquity. Every year, on the twenty-third of June, the Eve of St. John, the Brotherhood of the Green Wolf chose a new chief or master, who had always to be taken from the hamlet of Conihout. On being elected, the new head of the brotherhood assumed the title of the Green Wolf, and donned a peculiar costume consisting of a long green mantle and a very tall green hat of a conical shape and without a brim. Thus arrayed he stalked solemnly at the head of the brothers, chanting the hymn of St. John, the crucifix and holy banner leading the way, to a place called Chouquet. Here the procession was met by the priest, precentors, and choir, who conducted the brotherhood to the

parish church. After hearing mass the company adjourned to the house of the Green Wolf, where a simple repast was served up to them. At night a bonfire was kindled to the sound of hand-bells by a young man and a young woman, both decked with flowers. Then the Green Wolf and his brothers, with their hoods down on their shoulders and holding each other by the hand, ran round the fire after the man who had been chosen to be the Green Wolf of the following year. Though only the first and the last man of the chain had a hand free, their business was to surround and seize thrice the future Green Wolf, who in his efforts to escape belaboured the brothers with a long wand which he carried. When at last they succeeded in catching him they carried him to the burning pile and made as if they would throw him on it. This ceremony over, they returned to the house of the Green Wolf, where a supper, still of the most meagre fare, was set before them. Up till midnight a sort of religious solemnity prevailed. But at the stroke of twelve all this was changed. Constraint gave way to license; pious hymns were replaced by Bacchanalian ditties, and the shrill quavering notes of the village fiddle hardly rose above the roar of voices that went up from the merry brotherhood of the Green Wolf. Next day, the twenty-fourth of June or Midsummer Day, was celebrated by the same personages with the same noisy gaiety. One of the ceremonies consisted in parading, to the sound of musketry, an enormous loaf of consecrated bread, which, rising in tiers, was surmounted by a pyramid of verdure adorned with ribbons. After that the holy hand-bells, deposited on the step of the altar, were entrusted as insignia of office to the man who was to be the Green Wolf next year.

At Château-Thierry, in the department of Aisne, the custom of lighting bonfires and dancing round them at the midsummer festival of St. John lasted down to about 1850; the fires were kindled especially when June had been rainy, and the people thought that the lighting of the bonfires would cause the rain to cease. In the Vosges it is still customary to kindle bonfires upon the hill-tops on Midsummer Eve; the people believe that the fires help to preserve the fruits of the earth and ensure good crops.

Bonfires were lit in almost all the hamlets of Poitou on the Eve of St. John. People marched round them thrice, carrying a branch of walnut in their hand. Shepherdesses and children passed sprigs of mullein (*verbascum*) and nuts across the flames; the nuts were supposed to cure toothache, and the mullein to protect the cattle from sickness and sorcery. When the fire died down people took some of the ashes home with them, either to keep them in the house as a preservative against thunder or to scatter them on the fields for the purpose of destroying corn-cockles and darnel. In Poitou also it used to be customary on the Eve of St. John to trundle a blazing wheel wrapt in straw over the fields to fertilise them.

In the mountainous part of Comminges, a province of Southern France, the midsummer fire is made by splitting open the trunk of a

tall tree, stuffing the crevice with shavings, and igniting the whole. A garland of flowers is fastened to the top of the tree, and at the moment when the fire is lighted the man who was last married has to climb up a ladder and bring the flowers down. In the flat parts of the same district the materials of the midsummer bonfires consist of fuel piled in the usual way; but they must be put together by men who have been married since the last midsummer festival, and each of these benedicts is obliged to lay a wreath of flowers on the top of the pile.

In Provence the midsummer fires are still popular. Children go from door to door begging for fuel, and they are seldom sent empty away. Formerly the priest, the mayor, and the aldermen used to walk in procession to the bonfire, and even deigned to light it; after which the assembly marched thrice round the burning pile. At Aix a nominal king, chosen from among the youth for his skill in shooting at a popinjay, presided over the midsummer festival. He selected his own officers, and escorted by a brilliant train marched to the bonfire, kindled it, and was the first to dance round it. Next day he distributed largesse to his followers. His reign lasted a year, during which he enjoyed certain privileges. He was allowed to attend the mass celebrated by the commander of the Knights of St. John on St. John's Day; the right of hunting was accorded to him, and soldiers might not be quartered in his house. At Marseilles also on this day one of the guilds chose a king of the *badache* or double axe; but it does not appear that he kindled the bonfire, which is said to have been lighted with great ceremony by the préfet and other authorities.

In Belgium the custom of kindling the midsummer bonfires has long disappeared from the great cities, but it is still kept up in rural districts and small towns. In that country the Eve of St. Peter's Day (the twenty-ninth of June) is celebrated by bonfires and dances exactly like those which commemorate St. John's Eve. Some people say that the fires of St. Peter, like those of St. John, are lighted in order to drive away dragons. In French Flanders down to 1789 a straw figure representing a man was always burned in the midsummer bonfire, and the figure of a woman was burned on St. Peter's Day, the twenty-ninth of June. In Belgium people jump over the midsummer bonfires as a preventive of colic, and they keep the ashes at home to hinder fire from breaking out.

The custom of lighting bonfires at midsummer has been observed in many parts of our own country, and as usual people danced round and leaped over them. In Wales three or nine different kinds of wood and charred faggots carefully preserved from the last midsummer were deemed necessary to build the bonfire, which was generally done on rising ground. In the Vale of Glamorgan a cart-wheel swathed in straw used to be ignited and sent rolling down the hill. If it kept alight all the way down and blazed for a long time, an abundant harvest was expected. On Midsummer Eve people in the Isle of Man were wont to light fires to the windward of every field, so that the smoke might pass over the corn; and they folded their cattle and

carried blazing furze or gorse round them several times. In Ireland cattle, especially barren cattle, were driven through the midsummer fires, and the ashes were thrown on the fields to fertilise them, or live coals were carried into them to prevent blight. In Scotland the traces of midsummer fires are few; but at that season in the highlands of Perthshire cowherds used to go round their folds thrice, in the direction of the sun, with lighted torches. This they did to purify the flocks and herds and to keep them from falling sick.

The practice of lighting bonfires on Midsummer Eve and dancing or leaping over them is, or was till recently, common all over Spain and in some parts of Italy and Sicily. In Malta great fires are kindled in the streets and squares of the towns and villages on the Eve of St. John (Midsummer Eve); formerly the Grand Master of the Order of St. John used on that evening to set fire to a heap of pitch barrels placed in front of the sacred Hospital. In Greece, too, the custom of kindling fires on St. John's Eve and jumping over them is said to be still universal. One reason assigned for it is a wish to escape from the fleas. According to another account, the women cry out, as they leap over the fire, "I leave my sins behind me." In Lesbos the fires on St. John's Eve are usually lighted by threes, and the people spring thrice over them, each with a stone on his head, saying, "I jump the hare's fire, my head a stone!" In Calymnos the midsummer fire is supposed to ensure abundance in the coming year as well as deliverance from fleas. The people dance round the fires singing, with stones on their heads, and then jump over the blaze or the glowing embers. When the fire is burning low, they throw the stones into it; and when it is nearly out, they make crosses on their legs and then go straightway and bathe in the sea.

The custom of kindling bonfires on Midsummer Day or on Midsummer Eve is widely spread among the Mohammedan peoples of North Africa, particularly in Morocco and Algeria; it is common both to the Berbers and to many of the Arabs or Arabic-speaking tribes. In these countries Midsummer Day (the twenty-fourth of June, Old Style) is called *l'ánsăra*. The fires are lit in the courtyards, at cross-roads, in the fields, and sometimes on the threshing-floors. Plants which in burning give out a thick smoke and an aromatic smell are much sought after for fuel on these occasions; among the plants used for the purpose are giant-fennel, thyme, rue, chervil-seed, camomile, geranium, and penny-royal. People expose themselves, and especially their children, to the smoke, and drive it towards the orchards and the crops. Also they leap across the fires; in some places everybody ought to repeat the leap seven times. Moreover they take burning brands from the fires and carry them through the houses in order to fumigate them. They pass things through the fire, and bring the sick into contact with it, while they utter prayers for their recovery. The ashes of the bonfires are also reputed to possess beneficial properties; hence in some places people rub their hair or their bodies with them. In some places they think that by leaping over the fires

they rid themselves of all misfortune, and that childless couples thereby obtain offspring. Berbers of the Rif province, in Northern Morocco, make great use of fires at midsummer for the good of themselves, their cattle, and their fruit-trees. They jump over the bonfires in the belief that this will preserve them in good health, and they light fires under fruit-trees to keep the fruit from falling untimely. And they imagine that by rubbing a paste of the ashes on their hair they prevent the hair from falling off their heads. In all these Moroccan customs, we are told, the beneficial effect is attributed wholly to the smoke, which is supposed to be endued with a magical quality that removes misfortune from men, animals, fruit-trees and crops.

The celebration of a midsummer festival by Mohammedan peoples is particularly remarkable, because the Mohammedan calendar, being purely lunar and uncorrected by intercalation, necessarily takes no note of festivals which occupy fixed points in the solar year; all strictly Mohammedan feasts, being pinned to the moon, slide gradually with that luminary through the whole period of the earth's revolution about the sun. This fact of itself seems to prove that among the Mohammedan peoples of Northern Africa, as among the Christian peoples of Europe, the midsummer festival is quite independent of the religion which the people publicly profess, and is a relic of a far older paganism.

§ 6. *The Hallowe'en Fires.*—From the foregoing survey we may infer that among the heathen forefathers of the European peoples the most popular and widespread fire-festival of the year was the great celebration of Midsummer Eve or Midsummer Day. The coincidence of the festival with the summer solstice can hardly be accidental. Rather we must suppose that our pagan ancestors purposely timed the ceremony of fire on earth to coincide with the arrival of the sun at the highest point of his course in the sky. If that was so, it follows that the old founders of the midsummer rites had observed the solstices or turning-points of the sun's apparent path in the sky, and that they accordingly regulated their festal calendar to some extent by astronomical considerations.

But while this may be regarded as fairly certain for what we may call the aborigines throughout a large part of the continent, it appears not to have been true of the Celtic peoples who inhabited the Land's End of Europe, the islands and promontories that stretch out into the Atlantic Ocean on the North-West. The principal fire-festivals of the Celts, which have survived, though in a restricted area and with diminished pomp, to modern times and even to our own day, were seemingly timed without any reference to the position of the sun in the heaven. They were two in number, and fell at an interval of six months, one being celebrated on the eve of May Day and the other on Allhallow Even or Hallowe'en, as it is now commonly called, that is, on the thirty-first of October, the day preceding All Saints' or Allhallows' Day. These dates coincide with none of the four great hinges on which the solar year revolves, to wit, the solstices and the

equinoxes. Nor do they agree with the principal seasons of the agricultural year, the sowing in spring and the reaping in autumn. For when May Day comes, the seed has long been committed to the earth; and when November opens, the harvest has long been reaped and garnered, the fields lie bare, the fruit-trees are stripped, and even the yellow leaves are fast fluttering to the ground. Yet the first of May and the first of November mark turning-points of the year in Europe; the one ushers in the genial heat and the rich vegetation of summer, the other heralds, if it does not share, the cold and barrenness of winter. Now these particular points of the year, as has been well pointed out by a learned and ingenious writer, while they are of comparatively little moment to the European husbandman, do deeply concern the European herdsman; for it is on the approach of summer that he drives his cattle out into the open to crop the fresh grass, and it is on the approach of winter that he leads them back to the safety and shelter of the stall. Accordingly it seems not improbable that the Celtic bisection of the year into two halves at the beginning of May and the beginning of November dates from a time when the Celts were mainly a pastoral people, dependent for their subsistence on their herds, and when accordingly the great epochs of the year for them were the days on which the cattle went forth from the homestead in early summer and returned to it again in early winter. Even in Central Europe, remote from the region now occupied by the Celts, a similar bisection of the year may be clearly traced in the great popularity, on the one hand, of May Day and its Eve (Walpurgis Night), and, on the other hand, of the Feast of All Souls at the beginning of November, which under a thin Christian cloak conceals an ancient pagan festival of the dead. Hence we may conjecture that everywhere throughout Europe the celestial division of the year according to the solstices was preceded by what we may call a terrestrial division of the year according to the beginning of summer and the beginning of winter.

Be that as it may, the two great Celtic festivals of May Day and the first of November or, to be more accurate, the Eves of these two days, closely resemble each other in the manner of their celebration and in the superstitions associated with them, and alike, by the antique character impressed upon both, betray a remote and purely pagan origin. The festival of May Day or Beltane, as the Celts called it, which ushered in summer, has already been described; it remains to give some account of the corresponding festival of Hallowe'en, which announced the arrival of winter.

Of the two feasts Hallowe'en was perhaps of old the more important, since the Celts would seem to have dated the beginning of the year from it rather than from Beltane. In the Isle of Man, one of the fortresses in which the Celtic language and lore longest held out against the siege of the Saxon invaders, the first of November, Old Style, has been regarded as New Year's day down to recent times. Thus Manx mummers used to go round on Hallowe'en (Old Style), singing, in the

Manx language, a sort of Hogmanay song which began "To-night is New Year's Night, *Hogunnaa!*" In ancient Ireland, a new fire used to be kindled every year on Hallowe'en or the Eve of Samhain, and from this sacred flame all the fires in Ireland were rekindled. Such a custom points strongly to Samhain or All Saints' Day (the first of November) as New Year's Day; since the annual kindling of a new fire takes place most naturally at the beginning of the year, in order that the blessed influence of the fresh fire may last throughout the whole period of twelve months. Another confirmation of the view that the Celts dated their year from the first of November is furnished by the manifold modes of divination which were commonly resorted to by Celtic peoples on Hallowe'en for the purpose of ascertaining their destiny, especially their fortune in the coming year; for when could these devices for prying into the future be more reasonably put in practice than at the beginning of the year? As a season of omens and auguries Hallowe'en seems to have far surpassed Beltane in the imagination of the Celts; from which we may with some probability infer that they reckoned their year from Hallowe'en rather than Beltane. Another circumstance of great moment which points to the same conclusion is the association of the dead with Hallowe'en. Not only among the Celts but throughout Europe, Hallowe'en, the night which marks the transition from autumn to winter, seems to have been of old the time of year when the souls of the departed were supposed to revisit their old homes in order to warm themselves by the fire and to comfort themselves with the good cheer provided for them in the kitchen or the parlour by their affectionate kinsfolk. It was, perhaps, a natural thought that the approach of winter should drive the poor shivering hungry ghosts from the bare fields and the leafless woodlands to the shelter of the cottage with its familiar fireside. Did not the lowing kine then troop back from the summer pastures in the forests and on the hills to be fed and cared for in the stalls, while the bleak winds whistled among the swaying boughs and the snow-drifts deepened in the hollows? and could the good-man and the good-wife deny to the spirits of their dead the welcome which they gave to the cows?

But it is not only the souls of the departed who are supposed to be hovering unseen on the day "when autumn to winter resigns the pale year." Witches then speed on their errands of mischief, some sweeping through the air on besoms, others galloping along the roads on tabby-cats, which for that evening are turned into coal-black steeds. The fairies, too, are all let loose, and hobgoblins of every sort roam freely about.

Yet while a glamour of mystery and awe has always clung to Hallowe'en in the minds of the Celtic peasantry, the popular celebration of the festival has been, at least in modern times, by no means of a prevailing gloomy cast; on the contrary it has been attended by picturesque features and merry pastimes, which rendered it the gayest night of all the year. Amongst the things which in the High-

lands of Scotland contributed to invest the festival with a romantic beauty were the bonfires which used to blaze at frequent intervals on the heights. "On the last day of autumn children gathered ferns, tar-barrels, the long thin stalks called *gàinisg*, and everything suitable for a bonfire. These were placed in a heap on some eminence near the house, and in the evening set fire to. The fires were called *Samhnagan*. There was one for each house, and it was an object of ambition who should have the biggest. Whole districts were brilliant with bonfires, and their glare across a Highland loch, and from many eminences, formed an exceedingly picturesque scene." Like the Beltane fires on the first of May, the Hallowe'en bonfires seem to have been kindled most commonly in the Perthshire Highlands. In the parish of Callander they still blazed down to near the end of the eighteenth century. When the fire had died down, the ashes were carefully collected in the form of a circle, and a stone was put in, near the circumference, for every person of the several families interested in the bonfire. Next morning, if any of these stones was found to be displaced or injured, the people made sure that the person represented by it was *fey* or devoted, and that he could not live twelve months from that day. At Balquhidder down to the latter part of the nineteenth century each household kindled its bonfire at Hallowe'en, but the custom was chiefly observed by children. The fires were lighted on any high knoll near the house; there was no dancing round them. Hallowe'en fires were also lighted in some districts of the north-east of Scotland, such as Buchan. Villagers and farmers alike must have their fire. In the villages the boys went from house to house and begged a peat from each householder, usually with the words, "Ge's a peat t' burn the witches." When they had collected enough peats, they piled them in a heap, together with straw, furze, and other combustible materials, and set the whole on fire. Then each of the youths, one after another, laid himself down on the ground as near to the fire as he could without being scorched, and thus lying allowed the smoke to roll over him. The others ran through the smoke and jumped over their prostrate comrade. When the heap was burned down, they scattered the ashes, vying with each other who should scatter them most.

In the northern part of Wales it used to be customary for every family to make a great bonfire called *Coel Coeth* on Hallowe'en. The fire was kindled on the most conspicuous spot near the house; and when it had nearly gone out every one threw into the ashes a white stone, which he had first marked. Then having said their prayers round the fire, they went to bed. Next morning, as soon as they were up, they came to search out the stones, and if any one of them was found to be missing, they had a notion that the person who threw it would die before he saw another Hallowe'en. According to Sir John Rhys, the habit of celebrating Hallowe'en by lighting bonfires on the hills is perhaps not yet extinct in Wales, and men still living can remember how the people who assisted at the bonfires would

wait till the last spark was out and then would suddenly take to their heels, shouting at the top of their voices, "The cropped black sow seize the hindmost!" The saying, as Sir John Rhys justly remarks, implies that originally one of the company became a victim in dead earnest. Down to the present time the saying is current in Carnarvonshire, where allusions to the cutty black sow are still occasionally made to frighten children. We can now understand why in Lower Brittany every person throws a pebble into the midsummer bonfire. Doubtless there, as in Wales and the Highlands of Scotland, omens of life and death have at one time or other been drawn from the position and state of the pebbles on the morning of All Saints' Day. The custom, thus found among three separate branches of the Celtic stock, probably dates from a period before their dispersion, or at least from a time when alien races had not yet driven home the wedges of separation between them.

In the Isle of Man also, another Celtic country, Hallowe'en was celebrated down to modern times by the kindling of fires, accompanied with all the usual ceremonies designed to prevent the baneful influence of fairies and witches.

§ 7. *The Midwinter Fires.*—If the heathen of ancient Europe celebrated, as we have good reason to believe, the season of Midsummer with a great festival of fire, of which the traces have survived in many places down to our own time, it is natural to suppose that they should have observed with similar rites the corresponding season of Midwinter; for Midsummer and Midwinter, or, in more technical language, the summer solstice and the winter solstice, are the two great turning-points in the sun's apparent course through the sky, and from the standpoint of primitive man nothing might seem more appropriate than to kindle fires on earth at the two moments when the fire and heat of the great luminary in heaven begin to wane or to wax.

In modern Christendom the ancient fire-festival of the winter solstice appears to survive, or to have survived down to recent years, in the old custom of the Yule log, clog, or block, as it was variously called in England. The custom was widespread in Europe, but seems to have flourished especially in England, France, and among the South Slavs; at least the fullest accounts of the custom come from these quarters. That the Yule log was only the winter counterpart of the midsummer bonfire, kindled within doors instead of in the open air on account of the cold and inclement weather of the season, was pointed out long ago by our English antiquary John Brand; and the view is supported by the many quaint superstitions attaching to the Yule log, superstitions which have no apparent connexion with Christianity but carry their heathen origin plainly stamped upon them. But while the two solstitial celebrations were both festivals of fire, the necessity or desirability of holding the winter celebration within doors lent it the character of a private or domestic festivity, which contrasts strongly with the publicity of the summer celebration, at which the people gathered on some open space or

conspicuous height, kindled a huge bonfire in common, and danced and made merry round it together.

Down to about the middle of the nineteenth century the old rite of the Yule log was kept up in some parts of Central Germany. Thus in the valleys of the Sieg and Lahn the Yule log, a heavy block of oak, was fitted into the floor of the hearth, where, though it glowed under the fire, it was hardly reduced to ashes within a year. When the new log was laid next year, the remains of the old one were ground to powder and strewed over the fields during the Twelve Nights, which was supposed to promote the growth of the crops. In some villages of Westphalia, the practice was to withdraw the Yule log (*Christbrand*) from the fire so soon as it was slightly charred; it was then kept carefully to be replaced on the fire whenever a thunderstorm broke, because the people believed that lightning would not strike a house in which the Yule log was smouldering. In other villages of Westphalia the old custom was to tie up the Yule log in the last sheaf cut at harvest.

In several provinces of France, and particularly in Provence, the custom of the Yule log or *tréfoir*, as it was called in many places, was long observed. A French writer of the seventeenth century denounces as superstitious "the belief that a log called the *tréfoir* or Christmas brand, which you put on the fire for the first time on Christmas Eve and continue to put on the fire for a little while every day till Twelfth Night, can, if kept under the bed, protect the house for a whole year from fire and thunder; that it can prevent the inmates from having chilblains on their heels in winter; that it can cure the cattle of many maladies; that if a piece of it be steeped in the water which cows drink it helps them to calve; and lastly that if the ashes of the log be strewn on the fields it can save the wheat from mildew."

In some parts of Flanders and France the remains of the Yule log were regularly kept in the house under a bed as a protection against thunder and lightning; in Berry, when thunder was heard, a member of the family used to take a piece of the log and throw it on the fire, which was believed to avert the lightning. Again, in Perigord, the charcoal and ashes are carefully collected and kept for healing swollen glands; the part of the trunk which has not been burnt in the fire is used by ploughmen to make the wedge for their plough, because they allege that it causes the seeds to thrive better; and the women keep pieces of it till Twelfth Night for the sake of their chickens. Some people imagine that they will have as many chickens as there are sparks that fly out of the brands of the log when they shake them; and others place the extinct brands under the bed to drive away vermin. In various parts of France the charred log is thought to guard the house against sorcery as well as against lightning.

In England the customs and beliefs concerning the Yule log used to be similar. On the night of Christmas Eve, says the antiquary John Brand, "our ancestors were wont to light up candles of an uncommon size, called Christmas Candles, and lay a log of wood upon the fire,

called a Yule-clog or Christmas-block, to illuminate the house, and, as it were, to turn night into day." The old custom was to light the Yule log with a fragment of its predecessor, which had been kept throughout the year for the purpose; where it was so kept, the fiend could do no mischief. The remains of the log were also supposed to guard the house against fire and lightning.

To this day the ritual of bringing in the Yule log is observed with much solemnity among the Southern Slavs, especially the Serbians. The log is usually a block of oak, but sometimes of olive or beech. They seem to think that they will have as many calves, lambs, pigs, and kids as they strike sparks out of the burning log. Some people carry a piece of the log out to the fields to protect them against hail. In Albania down to recent years it was a common custom to burn a Yule log at Christmas, and the ashes of the fire were scattered on the fields to make them fertile. The Huzuls, a Slavonic people of the Carpathians, kindle fire by the friction of wood on Christmas Eve (Old Style, the fifth of January) and keep it burning till Twelfth Night.

It is remarkable how common the belief appears to have been that the remains of the Yule log, if kept throughout the year, had power to protect the house against fire and especially against lightning. As the Yule log was frequently of oak, it seems possible that this belief may be a relic of the old Aryan creed which associated the oak-tree with the god of thunder. Whether the curative and fertilising virtues ascribed to the ashes of the Yule log, which are supposed to heal cattle as well as men, to enable cows to calve, and to promote the fruitfulness of the earth, may not be derived from the same ancient source, is a question which deserves to be considered.

§ 8. *The Need-fire.*—The fire-festivals hitherto described are all celebrated periodically at certain stated times of the year. But besides these regularly recurring celebrations the peasants in many parts of Europe have been wont from time immemorial to resort to a ritual of fire at irregular intervals in seasons of distress and calamity, above all when their cattle were attacked by epidemic disease. No account of the popular European fire-festivals would be complete without some notice of these remarkable rites, which have all the greater claim on our attention because they may perhaps be regarded as the source and origin of all the other fire-festivals; certainly they must date from a very remote antiquity. The general name by which they are known among the Teutonic peoples is need-fire. Sometimes the need-fire was known as "wild fire," to distinguish it no doubt from the tame fire produced by more ordinary methods. Among Slavonic peoples it is called "living fire."

The history of the custom can be traced from the early Middle Ages, when it was denounced by the Church as a heathen superstition, down to the first half of the nineteenth century, when it was still occasionally practised in various parts of Germany, England, Scotland, and Ireland. Among Slavonic peoples it appears to have lingered even longer. The usual occasion for performing the rite was an

outbreak of plague or cattle-disease, for which the need-fire was believed to be an infallible remedy. The animals which were subjected to it included cows, pigs, horses, and sometimes geese. As a necessary preliminary to the kindling of the need-fire all other fires and lights in the neighbourhood were extinguished, so that not so much as a spark remained alight; for so long as even a night-light burned in a house, it was imagined that the need-fire could not kindle. Sometimes it was deemed enough to put out all the fires in the village; but sometimes the extinction extended to neighbouring villages or to a whole parish. In some parts of the Highlands of Scotland the rule was that all householders who dwelt within the two nearest running streams should put out their lights and fires on the day appointed. Usually the need-fire was made in the open air, but in some parts of Serbia it was kindled in a dark room; sometimes the place was a cross-way or a hollow in a road. In the Highlands of Scotland the proper places for performing the rite seem to have been knolls or small islands in rivers.

The regular method of producing the need-fire was by the friction of two pieces of wood; it might not be struck by flint and steel. Very exceptionally among some South Slavs we read of a practice of kindling a need-fire by striking a piece of iron on an anvil. Where the wood to be employed is specified, it is generally said to be oak; but on the Lower Rhine the fire was kindled by the friction of oak-wood or fir-wood. In Slavonic countries we hear of poplar, pear, and cornel wood being used for the purpose. Often the material is simply described as two pieces of dry wood. Sometimes nine different kinds of wood were deemed necessary, but rather perhaps to be burned in the bonfire than to be rubbed together for the production of the need-fire. The particular mode of kindling the need-fire varied in different districts; a very common one was this. Two poles were driven into the ground about a foot and a half from each other. Each pole had in the side facing the other a socket into which a smooth cross-piece or roller was fitted. The sockets were stuffed with linen, and the two ends of the roller were rammed tightly into the sockets. To make it more inflammable the roller was often coated with tar. A rope was then wound round the roller, and the free ends at both sides were gripped by two or more persons, who by pulling the rope to and fro caused the roller to revolve rapidly, till through the friction the linen in the sockets took fire. The sparks were immediately caught in tow or oakum and waved about in a circle until they burst into a bright glow, when straw was applied to it, and the blazing straw used to kindle the fuel that had been stacked to make the bonfire. Often a wheel, sometimes a cart-wheel or even a spinning-wheel, formed part of the mechanism; in Aberdeenshire it was called "the muckle wheel"; in the island of Mull the wheel was turned from east to west over nine spindles of oak-wood. Sometimes we are merely told that two wooden planks were rubbed together. Sometimes it was prescribed that the cart-wheel used for fire-making and the axle

on which it turned should both be new. Similarly it was said that the rope which turned the roller should be new; if possible it should be woven of strands taken from a gallows rope with which people had been hanged, but this was a counsel of perfection rather than a strict necessity.

Various rules were also laid down as to the kind of persons who might or should make the need-fire. Sometimes it was said that the two persons who pulled the rope which twirled the roller should always be brothers or at least bear the same baptismal name; sometimes it was deemed sufficient if they were both chaste young men. In some villages of Brunswick people thought that if everybody who lent a hand in kindling the need-fire did not bear the same Christian name, they would labour in vain. In Silesia the tree employed to produce the need-fire used to be felled by a pair of twin brothers. In the western islands of Scotland the fire was kindled by eighty-one married men, who rubbed two great planks against each other, working in relays of nine; in North Uist the nine times nine who made the fire were all first-begotten sons, but we are not told whether they were married or single. Among the Serbians the need-fire is sometimes kindled by a boy and girl between eleven and fourteen years of age, who work stark naked in a dark room; sometimes it is made by an old man and an old woman also in the dark. In Bulgaria, too, the makers of need-fire strip themselves of their clothes; in Caithness they divested themselves of all kinds of metal. If after long rubbing of the wood no fire was elicited they concluded that some fire must still be burning in the village; so a strict search was made from house to house, any fire that might be found was put out, and the negligent householder punished or upbraided; indeed a heavy fine might be inflicted on him.

When the need-fire was at last kindled, the bonfire was lit from it, and as soon as the blaze had somewhat died down, the sick animals were driven over the glowing embers, sometimes in a regular order of precedence, first the pigs, next the cows, and last of all the horses. Sometimes they were driven twice or thrice through the smoke and flames, so that occasionally some of them were scorched to death. As soon as all the beasts were through, the young folk would rush wildly at the ashes and cinders, sprinkling and blackening each other with them; those who were most blackened would march in triumph behind the cattle into the village and would not wash themselves for a long time. From the bonfire people carried live embers home and used them to rekindle the fires in their houses. These brands, after being extinguished in water, they sometimes put in the mangers at which the cattle fed, and kept them there for a while. Ashes from the need-fire were also strewed on the fields to protect the crops against vermin; sometimes they were taken home to be employed as remedies in sickness, being sprinkled on the ailing part or mixed in water and drunk by the patient. In the western islands of Scotland and on the adjoining mainland, as soon as the fire on the domestic hearth had been rekindled from the need-

fire, a pot full of water was set on it, and the water thus heated was afterwards sprinkled upon the people infected with the plague or upon the cattle that were tainted by the murrain. Special virtue was attributed to the smoke of the bonfire; in Sweden fruit-trees and nets were fumigated with it, in order that the trees might bear fruit and the nets catch fish. In the Highlands of Scotland the need-fire was accounted a sovereign remedy for witchcraft. In the island of Mull, when the fire was kindled as a cure for the murrain, we hear of the rite being accompanied by the sacrifice of a sick heifer, which was cut in pieces and burnt. Slavonian and Bulgarian peasants conceive cattle-plague as a foul fiend or vampyre which can be kept at bay by interposing a barrier of fire between it and the herds. A similar conception may perhaps have originally everywhere underlain the use of the need-fire as a remedy for the murrain. It appears that in some parts of Germany the people did not wait for an outbreak of cattle-plague, but, taking time by the forelock, kindled a need-fire annually to prevent the calamity. Similarly in Poland the peasants are said to kindle fires in the village streets every year on St. Rochus's day and to drive the cattle thrice through them in order to protect the beasts against the murrain. We have seen that in the Hebrides the cattle were in like manner driven annually round the Beltane fires for the same purpose. In some cantons of Switzerland children still kindle a need-fire by the friction of wood for the sake of dispelling a mist.

CHAPTER LXIII

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE FIRE-FESTIVALS

§ 1. *On the Fire-festivals in general.*—The foregoing survey of the popular fire-festivals of Europe suggests some general observations. In the first place we can hardly help being struck by the resemblance which the ceremonies bear to each other, at whatever time of the year and in whatever part of Europe they are celebrated. The custom of kindling great bonfires, leaping over them, and driving cattle through or round them would seem to have been practically universal throughout Europe, and the same may be said of the processions or races with blazing torches round fields, orchards, pastures, or cattle-stalls. Less widespread are the customs of hurling lighted discs into the air and trundling a burning wheel down hill. The ceremonial of the Yule log is distinguished from that of the other fire-festivals by the privacy and domesticity which characterise it; but this distinction may well be due simply to the rough weather of midwinter, which is apt not only to render a public assembly in the open air disagreeable, but also at any moment to defeat the object of the assembly by extinguishing the all-important fire under a downpour of rain or a fall of snow. Apart from these local or seasonal differences, the general resemblance between

the fire-festivals at all times of the year and in all places is tolerably close. And as the ceremonies themselves resemble each other, so do the benefits which the people expect to reap from them. Whether applied in the form of bonfires blazing at fixed points, or of torches carried about from place to place, or of embers and ashes taken from the smouldering heap of fuel, the fire is believed to promote the growth of the crops and the welfare of man and beast, either positively by stimulating them, or negatively by averting the dangers and calamities which threaten them from such causes as thunder and lightning, conflagration, blight, mildew, vermin, sterility, disease, and not least of all witchcraft.

But we naturally ask, How did it come about that benefits so great and manifold were supposed to be attained by means so simple? In what way did people imagine that they could procure so many goods or avoid so many ills by the application of fire and smoke, of embers and ashes? Two different explanations of the fire-festivals have been given by modern enquirers. On the one hand it has been held that they are sun-charms or magical ceremonies intended, on the principle of imitative magic, to ensure a needful supply of sunshine for men, animals, and plants by kindling fires which mimic on earth the great source of light and heat in the sky. This was the view of Wilhelm Mannhardt. It may be called the solar theory. On the other hand it has been maintained that the ceremonial fires have no necessary reference to the sun but are simply purificatory in intention, being designed to burn up and destroy all harmful influences, whether these are conceived in a personal form as witches, demons, and monsters, or in an impersonal form as a sort of pervading taint or corruption of the air. This is the view of Dr. Edward Westermarck and apparently of Professor Eugen Mogk. It may be called the purificatory theory. Obviously the two theories postulate two very different conceptions of the fire which plays the principal part in the rites. On the one view, the fire, like sunshine in our latitude, is a genial creative power which fosters the growth of plants and the development of all that makes for health and happiness; on the other view, the fire is a fierce destructive power which blasts and consumes all the noxious elements, whether spiritual or material, that menace the life of men, of animals, and of plants. According to the one theory the fire is a stimulant, according to the other it is a disinfectant; on the one view its virtue is positive, on the other it is negative.

Yet the two explanations, different as they are in the character which they attribute to the fire, are perhaps not wholly irreconcilable. If we assume that the fires kindled at these festivals were primarily intended to imitate the sun's light and heat, may we not regard the purificatory and disinfecting qualities, which popular opinion certainly appears to have ascribed to them, as attributes derived directly from the purificatory and disinfecting qualities of sunshine? In this way we might conclude that, while the imitation of sunshine in these ceremonies was primary and original, the purification attributed to

them was secondary and derivative. Such a conclusion, occupying an intermediate position between the two opposing theories and recognising an element of truth in both of them, was adopted by me in earlier editions of this work; but in the meantime Dr. Westermarck has argued powerfully in favour of the purificatory theory alone, and I am bound to say that his arguments carry great weight, and that on a fuller review of the facts the balance of evidence seems to me to incline decidedly in his favour. However, the case is not so clear as to justify us in dismissing the solar theory without discussion, and accordingly I propose to adduce the considerations which tell for it before proceeding to notice those which tell against it. A theory which had the support of so learned and sagacious an investigator as W. Mannhardt is entitled to a respectful hearing.

§ 2. *The Solar Theory of the Fire-festivals.*—In an earlier part of this work we saw that savages resort to charms for making sunshine, and it would be no wonder if primitive man in Europe did the same. Indeed, when we consider the cold and cloudy climate of Europe during a great part of the year, we shall find it natural that sun-charms should have played a much more prominent part among the superstitious practices of European peoples than among those of savages who live nearer the equator and who consequently are apt to get in the course of nature more sunshine than they want. This view of the festivals may be supported by various arguments drawn partly from their dates, partly from the nature of the rites, and partly from the influence which they are believed to exert upon the weather and on vegetation.

First, in regard to the dates of the festivals it can be no mere accident that two of the most important and widely spread of the festivals are timed to coincide more or less exactly with the summer and winter solstices, that is, with the two turning-points in the sun's apparent course in the sky when he reaches respectively his highest and his lowest elevation at noon. Indeed with respect to the midwinter celebration of Christmas we are not left to conjecture; we know from the express testimony of the ancients that it was instituted by the church to supersede an old heathen festival of the birth of the sun, which was apparently conceived to be born again on the shortest day of the year, after which his light and heat were seen to grow till they attained their full maturity at midsummer. Therefore it is no very far-fetched conjecture to suppose that the Yule log, which figures so prominently in the popular celebration of Christmas, was originally designed to help the labouring sun of midwinter to rekindle his seemingly expiring light.

Not only the date of some of the festivals but the manner of their celebration suggests a conscious imitation of the sun. The custom of rolling a burning wheel down a hill, which is often observed at these ceremonies, might well pass for an imitation of the sun's course in the sky, and the imitation would be especially appropriate on Midsummer Day when the sun's annual declension begins. Indeed the custom

has been thus interpreted by some of those who have recorded it. Not less graphic, it may be said, is the mimicry of his apparent revolution by swinging a burning tar-barrel round a pole. Again, the common practice of throwing fiery discs, sometimes expressly said to be shaped like suns, into the air at the festivals may well be a piece of imitative magic. In these, as in so many cases, the magic force may be supposed to take effect through mimicry or sympathy: by imitating the desired result you actually produce it: by counterfeiting the sun's progress through the heavens you really help the luminary to pursue his celestial journey with punctuality and despatch. The name "fire of heaven," by which the midsummer fire is sometimes popularly known, clearly implies a consciousness of a connexion between the earthly and the heavenly flame.

Again, the manner in which the fire appears to have been originally kindled on these occasions has been alleged in support of the view that it was intended to be a mock-sun. As some scholars have perceived, it is highly probable that at the periodic festivals in former times fire was universally obtained by the friction of two pieces of wood. It is still so procured in some places both at the Easter and the Midsummer festivals, and it is expressly said to have been formerly so procured at the Beltane celebration both in Scotland and Wales. But what makes it nearly certain that this was once the invariable mode of kindling the fire at these periodic festivals is the analogy of the need-fire, which has almost always been produced by the friction of wood, and sometimes by the revolution of a wheel. It is a plausible conjecture that the wheel employed for this purpose represents the sun, and if the fires at the regularly recurring celebrations were formerly produced in the same way, it might be regarded as a confirmation of the view that they were originally sun-charms. In point of fact there is, as Kuhn has indicated, some evidence to show that the midsummer fire was originally thus produced. We have seen that many Hungarian swine-herds make fire on Midsummer Eve by rotating a wheel round a wooden axle wrapt in hemp, and that they drive their pigs through the fire thus made. At Obermedlingen, in Swabia, the "fire of heaven," as it was called, was made on St. Vitus's Day (the fifteenth of June) by igniting a cart-wheel, which, smeared with pitch and plaited with straw, was fastened on a pole twelve feet high, the top of the pole being inserted in the nave of the wheel. This fire was made on the summit of a mountain, and as the flame ascended, the people uttered a set form of words, with eyes and arms directed heavenward. Here the fixing of a wheel on a pole and igniting it suggests that originally the fire was produced, as in the case of the need-fire, by the revolution of a wheel. The day on which the ceremony takes place (the fifteenth of June) is near midsummer; and we have seen that in Masuren fire is, or used to be, actually made on Midsummer Day by turning a wheel rapidly about an oaken pole, though it is not said that the new fire so obtained is used to light a bonfire. However, we must bear in mind that in all such cases the use of a wheel may be merely a mechanical

device to facilitate the operation of fire-making by increasing the friction; it need not have any symbolical significance.

Further, the influence which these fires, whether periodic or occasional, are supposed to exert on the weather and vegetation may be cited in support of the view that they are sun-charms, since the effects ascribed to them resemble those of sunshine. Thus, the French belief that in a rainy June the lighting of the midsummer bonfires will cause the rain to cease appears to assume that they can disperse the dark clouds and make the sun to break out in radiant glory, drying the wet earth and dripping trees. Similarly the use of the need-fire by Swiss children on foggy days for the purpose of clearing away the mist may very naturally be interpreted as a sun-charm. In the Vosges Mountains the people believe that the midsummer fires help to preserve the fruits of the earth and ensure good crops. In Sweden the warmth or cold of the coming season is inferred from the direction in which the flames of the May Day bonfire are blown; if they blow to the south, it will be warm, if to the north, cold. No doubt at present the direction of the flames is regarded merely as an augury of the weather, not as a mode of influencing it. But we may be pretty sure that this is one of the cases in which magic has dwindled into divination. So in the Eifel Mountains, when the smoke blows towards the corn-fields, this is an omen that the harvest will be abundant. But the older view may have been not merely that the smoke and flames prognosticated, but that they actually produced an abundant harvest, the heat of the flames acting like sunshine on the corn. Perhaps it was with this view that people in the Isle of Man lit fires to windward of their fields in order that the smoke might blow over them. So in South Africa, about the month of April, the Matabeles light huge fires to the windward of their gardens, "their idea being that the smoke, by passing over the crops, will assist the ripening of them." Among the Zulus also "medicine is burned on a fire placed to windward of the garden, the fumigation which the plants in consequence receive being held to improve the crop." Again, the idea of our European peasants that the corn will grow well as far as the blaze of the bonfire is visible, may be interpreted as a remnant of the belief in the quickening and fertilising power of the bonfires. The same belief, it may be argued, reappears in the notion that embers taken from the bonfires and inserted in the fields will promote the growth of the crops, and it may be thought to underlie the customs of sowing flax-seed in the direction in which the flames blow, of mixing the ashes of the bonfire with the seed-corn at sowing, of scattering the ashes by themselves over the field to fertilise it, and of incorporating a piece of the Yule log in the plough to make the seeds thrive. The opinion that the flax or hemp will grow as high as the flames rise or the people leap over them belongs clearly to the same class of ideas. Again, at Konz, on the banks of the Moselle, if the blazing wheel which was trundled down the hillside reached the river without being extinguished, this was hailed as a proof that the vintage would be abundant. So firmly was this belief

held that the successful performance of the ceremony entitled the villagers to levy a tax upon the owners of the neighbouring vineyards. Here the unextinguished wheel might be taken to represent an unclouded sun, which in turn would portend an abundant vintage. So the waggon-load of white wine which the villagers received from the vineyards round about might pass for a payment for the sunshine which they had procured for the grapes. Similarly in the Vale of Glamorgan a blazing wheel used to be trundled down hill on Midsummer Day, and if the fire were extinguished before the wheel reached the foot of the hill, the people expected a bad harvest; whereas if the wheel kept alight all the way down and continued to blaze for a long time, the farmers looked forward to heavy crops that summer. Here, again, it is natural to suppose that the rustic mind traced a direct connexion between the fire of the wheel and the fire of the sun, on which the crops are dependent.

But in popular belief the quickening and fertilising influence of the bonfires is not limited to the vegetable world; it extends also to animals. This plainly appears from the Irish custom of driving barren cattle through the midsummer fires, from the French belief that the Yule log steeped in water helps cows to calve, from the French and Serbian notion that there will be as many chickens, calves, lambs, and kids as there are sparks struck out of the Yule log, from the French custom of putting the ashes of the bonfires in the fowls' nests to make the hens lay eggs, and from the German practice of mixing the ashes of the bonfires with the drink of cattle in order to make the animals thrive. Further, there are clear indications that even human fecundity is supposed to be promoted by the genial heat of the fires. In Morocco the people think that childless couples can obtain offspring by leaping over the midsummer bonfire. It is an Irish belief that a girl who jumps thrice over the midsummer bonfire will soon marry and become the mother of many children; in Flanders women leap over the midsummer fires to ensure an easy delivery; in various parts of France they think that if a girl dances round nine fires she will be sure to marry within the year, and in Bohemia they fancy that she will do so if she merely sees nine of the bonfires. On the other hand, in Lechrain people say that if a young man and woman, leaping over the midsummer fire together, escape unsmirched, the young woman will not become a mother within twelve months; the flames have not touched and fertilised her. In parts of Switzerland and France the lighting of the Yule log is accompanied by a prayer that the women may bear children, the she-goats bring forth kids, and the ewes drop lambs. The rule observed in some places that the bonfires should be kindled by the person who was last married seems to belong to the same class of ideas, whether it be that such a person is supposed to receive from, or to impart to, the fire a generative and fertilising influence. The common practice of lovers leaping over the fires hand in hand may very well have originated in a notion that thereby their marriage would be blessed with offspring; and the like motive would explain

the custom which obliges couples married within the year to dance to the light of torches. And the scenes of profligacy which appear to have marked the midsummer celebration among the Esthonians, as they once marked the celebration of May Day among ourselves, may have sprung, not from the mere licence of holiday-makers, but from a crude notion that such orgies were justified, if not required, by some mysterious bond which linked the life of man to the courses of the heavens at this turning-point of the year.

At the festivals which we are considering the custom of kindling bonfires is commonly associated with a custom of carrying lighted torches about the fields, the orchards, the pastures, the flocks and the herds; and we can hardly doubt that the two customs are only two different ways of attaining the same object, namely, the benefits which are believed to flow from the fire, whether it be stationary or portable. Accordingly if we accept the solar theory of the bonfires, we seem bound to apply it also to the torches; we must suppose that the practice of marching or running with blazing torches about the country is simply a means of diffusing far and wide the genial influence of the sunshine of which these flickering flames are a feeble imitation. In favour of this view it may be said that sometimes the torches are carried about the fields for the express purpose of fertilising them, and with the same intention live coals from the bonfires are sometimes placed in the fields to prevent blight. On the eve of Twelfth Day in Normandy men, women, and children run wildly through the fields and orchards with lighted torches, which they wave about the branches and dash against the trunks of the fruit-trees for the sake of burning the moss and driving away the moles and field-mice. "They believe that the ceremony fulfills the double object of exorcising the vermin whose multiplication would be a real calamity, and of imparting fecundity to the trees, the fields, and even the cattle"; and they imagine that the more the ceremony is prolonged, the greater will be the crop of fruit next autumn. In Bohemia they say that the corn will grow as high as they fling the blazing besoms into the air. Nor are such notions confined to Europe. In Corea, a few days before the New Year festival, the eunuchs of the palace swing burning torches, chanting invocations the while, and this is supposed to ensure bountiful crops for the next season. The custom of trundling a burning wheel over the fields, which used to be observed in Poitou for the express purpose of fertilising them, may be thought to embody the same idea in a still more graphic form; since in this way the mock-sun itself, not merely its light and heat represented by torches, is made actually to pass over the ground which is to receive its quickening and kindly influence. Once more, the custom of carrying lighted brands round cattle is plainly equivalent to driving the animals through the bonfire; and if the bonfire is a sun-charm, the torches must be so also.

§ 3. *The Purificatory Theory of the Fire-festivals.*—Thus far we have considered what may be said for the theory that at the European fire-festivals the fire is kindled as a charm to ensure an abundant supply

of sunshine for man and beast, for corn and fruits. It remains to consider what may be said against this theory and in favour of the view that in these rites fire is employed not as a creative but as a cleansing agent, which purifies men, animals, and plants by burning up and consuming the noxious elements, whether material or spiritual, which menace all living things with disease and death.

First, then, it is to be observed that the people who practise the fire-customs appear never to allege the solar theory in explanation of them, while on the contrary they do frequently and emphatically put forward the purificatory theory. This is a strong argument in favour of the purificatory and against the solar theory; for the popular explanation of a popular custom is never to be rejected except for grave cause. And in the present case there seems to be no adequate reason for rejecting it. The conception of fire as a destructive agent, which can be turned to account for the consumption of evil things, is so simple and obvious that it could hardly escape the minds even of the rude peasantry with whom these festivals originated. On the other hand the conception of fire as an emanation of the sun, or at all events as linked to it by a bond of physical sympathy, is far less simple and obvious; and though the use of fire as a charm to produce sunshine appears to be undeniable, nevertheless in attempting to explain popular customs we should never have recourse to a more recondite idea when a simpler one lies to hand and is supported by the explicit testimony of the people themselves. Now in the case of the fire-festivals the destructive aspect of fire is one upon which the people dwell again and again; and it is highly significant that the great evil against which the fire is directed appears to be witchcraft. Again and again we are told that the fires are intended to burn or repel the witches; and the intention is sometimes graphically expressed by burning an effigy of a witch in the fire. Hence, when we remember the great hold which the dread of witchcraft has had on the popular European mind in all ages, we may suspect that the primary intention of all these fire-festivals was simply to destroy or at all events get rid of the witches, who were regarded as the causes of nearly all the misfortunes and calamities that befall men, their cattle, and their crops.

This suspicion is confirmed when we examine the evils for which the bonfires and torches were supposed to provide a remedy. Foremost, perhaps, among these evils we may reckon the diseases of cattle; and of all the ills that witches are believed to work there is probably none which is so constantly insisted on as the harm they do to the herds, particularly by stealing the milk from the cows. Now it is significant that the need-fire, which may perhaps be regarded as the parent of the periodic fire-festivals, is kindled above all as a remedy for a murrain or other disease of cattle; and the circumstance suggests, what on general grounds seems probable, that the custom of kindling the need-fire goes back to a time when the ancestors of the European peoples subsisted chiefly on the products of their herds, and when agriculture as yet played a subordinate part in their lives. Witches

and wolves are the two great foes still dreaded by the herdsman in many parts of Europe; and we need not wonder that he should resort to fire as a powerful means of banning them both. Among Slavonic peoples it appears that the foes whom the need-fire is designed to combat are not so much living witches as vampyres and other evil spirits, and the ceremony aims rather at repelling these baleful beings than at actually consuming them in the flames. But for our present purpose these distinctions are immaterial. The important thing to observe is that among the Slavs the need-fire, which is probably the orginal of all the ceremonial fires now under consideration, is not a sun-charm, but clearly and unmistakably nothing but a means of protecting man and beast against the attacks of maleficent creatures, whom the peasant thinks to burn or scare by the heat of the fire, just as he might burn or scare wild animals.

Again, the bonfires are often supposed to protect the fields against hail and the homestead against thunder and lightning. But both hail and thunderstorms are frequently thought to be caused by witches; hence the fire which bans the witches necessarily serves at the same time as a talisman against hail, thunder, and lightning. Further, brands taken from the bonfires are commonly kept in the houses to guard them against conflagration; and though this may perhaps be done on the principle of homoeopathic magic, one fire being thought to act as a preventive of another, it is also possible that the intention may be to keep witch-incendiaries at bay. Again, people leap over the bonfires as a preventive of colic, and look at the flames steadily in order to preserve their eyes in good health; and both colic and sore eyes are in Germany, and probably elsewhere, set down to the machinations of witches. Once more, to leap over the midsummer fires or to circumambulate them is thought to prevent a person from feeling pains in his back at reaping; and in Germany such pains are called "witch-shots" and ascribed to witchcraft.

But if the bonfires and torches of the fire-festivals are to be regarded primarily as weapons directed against witches and wizards, it becomes probable that the same explanation applies not only to the flaming discs which are hurled into the air, but also to the burning wheels which are rolled down hill on these occasions; discs and wheels, we may suppose, are alike intended to burn the witches who hover invisible in the air or haunt unseen the fields, the orchards, and the vineyards on the hillside. Certainly witches are constantly thought to ride through the air on broomsticks or other equally convenient vehicles; and if they do so, how can you get at them so effectually as by hurling lighted missiles, whether discs, torches, or besoms, after them as they flit past overhead in the gloom? The South Slavonian peasant believes that witches ride in the dark hail-clouds; so he shoots at the clouds to bring down the hags, while he curses them, saying, "Curse, curse Herodias, thy mother is a heathen, damned of God and fettered through the Redeemer's blood." Also he brings out a pot of glowing charcoal on which he has thrown holy oil, laurel leaves,

and wormwood to make a smoke. The fumes are supposed to ascend to the clouds and stupefy the witches, so that they tumble down to earth. And in order that they may not fall soft, but may hurt themselves very much, the yokel hastily brings out a chair and tilts it bottom up so that the witch in falling may break her legs on the legs of the chair. Worse than that, he cruelly lays scythes, bill-hooks, and other formidable weapons edge upwards so as to cut and mangle the poor wretches when they drop plump upon them from the clouds.

On this view the fertility supposed to follow the application of fire in the form of bonfires, torches, discs, rolling wheels, and so forth, is not conceived as resulting directly from an increase of solar heat which the fire has magically generated; it is merely an indirect result obtained by freeing the reproductive powers of plants and animals from the fatal obstruction of witchcraft. And what is true of the reproduction of plants and animals may hold good also of the fertility of the human sexes. The bonfires are supposed to promote marriage and to procure offspring for childless couples. This happy effect need not flow directly from any quickening or fertilising energy in the fire; it may follow indirectly from the power of the fire to remove those obstacles which the spells of witches and wizards notoriously present to the union of man and wife.

On the whole, then, the theory of the purificatory virtue of the ceremonial fires appears more probable and more in accordance with the evidence than the opposing theory of their connexion with the sun.

CHAPTER LXIV

THE BURNING OF HUMAN BEINGS IN THE FIRES

§ 1. *The Burning of Effigies in the Fires.*—We have still to ask, What is the meaning of burning effigies in the fire at these festivals? After the preceding investigation the answer to the question seems obvious. As the fires are often alleged to be kindled for the purpose of burning the witches, and as the effigy burnt in them is sometimes called "the Witch," we might naturally be disposed to conclude that all the effigies consumed in the flames on these occasions represent witches or warlocks, and that the custom of burning them is merely a substitute for burning the wicked men and women themselves, since on the principle of homoeopathic or imitative magic you practically destroy the witch herself in destroying her effigy. On the whole this explanation of the burning of straw figures in human shape at the festivals is perhaps the most probable.

Yet it may be that this explanation does not apply to all the cases, and that certain of them may admit and even require another interpretation. For the effigies so burned, as I have already remarked, can hardly be separated from the effigies of Death which are burned

or otherwise destroyed in spring; and grounds have been already given for regarding the so-called effigies of Death as really representatives of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation. Are the other effigies, which are burned in the spring and midsummer bonfires, susceptible of the same explanation? It would seem so. For just as the fragments of the so-called Death are stuck in the fields to make the crops grow, so the charred embers of the figure burned in the spring bonfires are sometimes laid on the fields in the belief that they will keep vermin from the crop. Again, the rule that the last married bride must leap over the fire in which the straw-man is burned on Shrove Tuesday, is probably intended to make her fruitful. But, as we have seen, the power of blessing women with offspring is a special attribute of tree-spirits; it is therefore a fair presumption that the burning effigy over which the bride must leap is a representative of the fertilising tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation. This character of the effigy, as representative of the spirit of vegetation, is almost unmistakable when the figure is composed of an unthreshed sheaf of corn or is covered from head to foot with flowers. Again, it is to be noted that, instead of a puppet, trees, either living or felled, are sometimes burned both in the spring and midsummer bonfires. Now, considering the frequency with which the tree-spirit is represented in human shape, it is hardly rash to suppose that when sometimes a tree and sometimes an effigy is burned in these fires, the effigy and the tree are regarded as equivalent to each other, each being a representative of the tree-spirit. This, again, is confirmed by observing, first, that sometimes the effigy which is to be burned is carried about simultaneously with a May-tree, the former being carried by the boys, the latter by the girls; and, second, that the effigy is sometimes tied to a living tree and burned with it. In these cases, we can scarcely doubt, the tree-spirit is represented, as we have found it represented before, in duplicate, both by the tree and by the effigy. That the true character of the effigy as a representative of the beneficent spirit of vegetation should sometimes be forgotten, is natural. The custom of burning a beneficent god is too foreign to later modes of thought to escape misinterpretation. Naturally enough the people who continued to burn his image came in time to identify it as the effigy of persons, whom, on various grounds, they regarded with aversion, such as Judas Iscariot, Luther, and a witch.

The general reasons for killing a god or his representative have been examined in a preceding chapter. But when the god happens to be a deity of vegetation, there are special reasons why he should die by fire. For light and heat are necessary to vegetable growth; and, on the principle of sympathetic magic, by subjecting the personal representative of vegetation to their influence, you secure a supply of these necessaries for trees and crops. In other words, by burning the spirit of vegetation in a fire which represents the sun, you make sure that, for a time at least, vegetation shall have plenty of sun. It may be objected that, if the intention is simply to secure enough

sunshine for vegetation, this end would be better attained, on the principles of sympathetic magic, by merely passing the representative of vegetation through the fire instead of burning him. In point of fact this is sometimes done. In Russia, as we have seen, the straw figure of Kupalo is not burned in the midsummer fire, but merely carried backwards and forwards across it. But, for the reasons already given, it is necessary that the god should die; so next day Kupalo is stripped of her ornaments and thrown into a stream. In this Russian custom the passage of the image through the fire, if it is not simply a purification, may possibly be a sun-charm; the killing of the god is a separate act, and the mode of killing him—by drowning—is probably a rain-charm. But usually people have not thought it necessary to draw this fine distinction; for the various reasons already assigned, it is advantageous, they think, to expose the god of vegetation to a considerable degree of heat, and it is also advantageous to kill him, and they combine these advantages in a rough-and-ready way by burning him.

§ 2. *The Burning of Men and Animals in the Fires.*—In the popular customs connected with the fire-festivals of Europe there are certain features which appear to point to a former practice of human sacrifice. We have seen reasons for believing that in Europe living persons have often acted as representatives of the tree-spirit and corn-spirit and have suffered death as such. There is no reason, therefore, why they should not have been burned, if any special advantages were likely to be attained by putting them to death in that way. The consideration of human suffering is not one which enters into the calculations of primitive man. Now, in the fire-festivals which we are discussing, the pretence of burning people is sometimes carried so far that it seems reasonable to regard it as a mitigated survival of an older custom of actually burning them. Thus in Aachen, as we saw, the man clad in peas-straw acts so cleverly that the children really believe he is being burned. At Jumièges in Normandy the man clad all in green, who bore the title of the Green Wolf, was pursued by his comrades, and when they caught him they feigned to fling him upon the midsummer bonfire. Similarly at the Beltane fires in Scotland the pretended victim was seized, and a show made of throwing him into the flames, and for some time afterwards people affected to speak of him as dead. Again, in the Hallowe'en bonfires of North-eastern Scotland we may perhaps detect a similar pretence in the custom observed by a lad of lying down as close to the fire as possible and allowing the other lads to leap over him. The titular king at Aix, who reigned for a year and danced the first dance round the midsummer bonfire, may perhaps in days of old have discharged the less agreeable duty of serving as fuel for that fire which in later times he only kindled. In the following customs Mannhardt is probably right in recognising traces of an old custom of burning a leaf-clad representative of the spirit of vegetation. At Wolfeck, in Austria, on Midsummer Day, a boy completely clad in green fir branches

goes from house to house, accompanied by a noisy crew, collecting wood for the bonfire. As he gets the wood he sings:

"Forest trees I want, But beer and wine,
No sour milk for me, So can the wood-man be jolly and gay."

In some parts of Bavaria, also, the boys who go from house to house collecting fuel for the midsummer bonfire envelop one of their number from head to foot in green branches of firs, and lead him by a rope through the whole village. At Moosheim, in Wurtemberg, the festival of St. John's Fire usually lasted for fourteen days, ending on the second Sunday after Midsummer Day. On this last day the bonfire was left in charge of the children, while the older people retired to a wood. Here they encased a young fellow in leaves and twigs, who, thus disguised, went to the fire, scattered it, and trod it out. All the people present fled at the sight of him.

But it seems possible to go farther than this. Of human sacrifices offered on these occasions the most unequivocal traces, as we have seen, are those which, about a hundred years ago, still lingered at the Beltane fires in the Highlands of Scotland, that is, among a Celtic people who, situated in a remote corner of Europe and almost completely isolated from foreign influence, had till then conserved their old heathenism better perhaps than any other people in the West of Europe. It is significant, therefore, that human sacrifices by fire are known, on unquestionable evidence, to have been systematically practised by the Celts. The earliest description of these sacrifices has been bequeathed to us by Julius Caesar. As conqueror of the hitherto independent Celts of Gaul, Caesar had ample opportunity of observing the national Celtic religion and manners, while these were still fresh and crisp from the native mint and had not yet been fused in the melting-pot of Roman civilisation. With his own notes Caesar appears to have incorporated the observations of a Greek explorer, by name Posidonius, who travelled in Gaul about fifty years before Caesar carried the Roman arms to the English Channel. The Greek geographer Strabo and the historian Diodorus seem also to have derived their descriptions of the Celtic sacrifices from the work of Posidonius, but independently of each other, and of Caesar, for each of the three derivative accounts contain some details which are not to be found in either of the others. By combining them, therefore, we can restore the original account of Posidonius with some probability, and thus obtain a picture of the sacrifices offered by the Celts of Gaul at the close of the second century before our era. The following seem to have been the main outlines of the custom. Condemned criminals were reserved by the Celts in order to be sacrificed to the gods at a great festival which took place once in every five years. The more there were of such victims, the greater was believed to be the fertility of the land. If there were not enough criminals to furnish victims, captives taken in war were immolated to supply the deficiency. When the time came the victims were sacrificed by the Druids or

priests. Some they shot down with arrows, some they impaled, and some they burned alive in the following manner. Colossal images of wicker-work or of wood and grass were constructed; these were filled with live men, cattle, and animals of other kinds; fire was then applied to the images, and they were burned with their living contents.

Such were the great festivals held once every five years. But besides these quinquennial festivals, celebrated on so grand a scale, and with, apparently, so large an expenditure of human life, it seems reasonable to suppose that festivals of the same sort, only on a lesser scale, were held annually, and that from these annual festivals are lineally descended some at least of the fire-festivals which, with their traces of human sacrifices, are still celebrated year by year in many parts of Europe. The gigantic images constructed of osiers or covered with grass in which the Druids enclosed their victims remind us of the leafy framework in which the human representative of the tree-spirit is still so often encased. Hence, seeing that the fertility of the land was apparently supposed to depend upon the due performance of these sacrifices, Mannhardt interpreted the Celtic victims, cased in osiers and grass, as representatives of the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation.

These wicker giants of the Druids seem to have had till lately, if not down to the present time, their representatives at the spring and midsummer festivals of modern Europe. At Douay, down at least to the early part of the nineteenth century, a procession took place annually on the Sunday nearest to the seventh of July. The great feature of the procession was a colossal figure, some twenty or thirty feet high, made of osiers, and called "the giant," which was moved through the streets by means of rollers and ropes worked by men who were enclosed within the effigy. The figure was armed as a knight with lance and sword, helmet and shield. Behind him marched his wife and his three children, all constructed of osiers on the same principle, but on a smaller scale. At Dunkirk the procession of the giants took place on Midsummer Day, the twenty-fourth of June. The festival, which was known as the Follies of Dunkirk, attracted multitudes of spectators. The giant was a huge figure of wicker-work, occasionally as much as forty-five feet high, dressed in a long blue robe with gold stripes, which reached to his feet, concealing the dozen or more men who made it dance and bob its head to the spectators. This colossal effigy went by the name of Papa Reuss, and carried in its pocket a bouncing infant of Brobdingnagian proportions. The rear was brought up by the daughter of the giant, constructed, like her sire, of wicker-work, and little, if at all, inferior to him in size. Most towns and even villages of Brabant and Flanders have, or used to have, similar wicker giants which were annually led about to the delight of the populace, who loved these grotesque figures, spoke of them with patriotic enthusiasm, and never wearied of gazing at them. At Antwerp the giant was so big that no gate in the city was large enough to let him go through; hence he could not visit his

brother giants in neighbouring towns, as the other Belgian giants used to do on solemn occasions.

In England artificial giants seem to have been a standing feature of the midsummer festival. A writer of the sixteenth century speaks of "Midsommer pageants in London, where to make the people wonder, are set forth great and uglie gyants marching as if they were alive, and armed at all points, but within they are stuffed full of browne paper and tow, which the shrewd boyes, underpeering, do guilefully discover, and turne to a greate derision." At Chester the annual pageant on Midsummer Eve included the effigies of four giants, with animals, hobby-horses, and other figures. At Coventry it appears that the giant's wife figured beside the giant. At Burford, in Oxfordshire, Midsummer Eve used to be celebrated with great jollity by the carrying of a giant and a dragon up and down the town. The last survivor of these perambulating English giants lingered at Salisbury, where an antiquary found him mouldering to decay in the neglected hall of the Tailors' Company about the year 1844. His bodily framework was a lath and hoop, like the one which used to be worn by Jack-in-the-Green on May Day.

In these cases the giants merely figured in the processions. But sometimes they were burned in the summer bonfires. Thus the people of the Rue aux Ours in Paris used annually to make a great wicker-work figure, dressed as a soldier, which they promenaded up and down the streets for several days, and solemnly burned on the third of July, the crowd of spectators singing *Salve Regina*. A personage who bore the title of king presided over the ceremony with a lighted torch in his hand. The burning fragments of the image were scattered among the people, who eagerly scrambled for them. The custom was abolished in 1743. In Brie, Isle de France, a wicker-work giant, eighteen feet high, was annually burned on Midsummer Eve.

Again, the Druidical custom of burning live animals, enclosed in wicker-work, has its counterpart at the spring and midsummer festivals. At Luchon in the Pyrenees on Midsummer Eve "a hollow column, composed of strong wicker-work, is raised to the height of about sixty feet in the centre of the principal suburb, and interlaced with green foliage up to the very top; while the most beautiful flowers and shrubs procurable are artistically arranged in groups below, so as to form a sort of background to the scene. The column is then filled with combustible materials, ready for ignition. At an appointed hour—about 8 P.M.—a grand procession, composed of the clergy, followed by young men and maidens in holiday attire, pour forth from the town chanting hymns, and take up their position around the column. Meanwhile, bonfires are lit, with beautiful effect, in the surrounding hills. As many living serpents as could be collected are now thrown into the column, which is set on fire at the base by means of torches, armed with which about fifty boys and men dance around with frantic gestures. The serpents, to avoid the flames, wriggle their way to the top, whence they are seen lashing out laterally until finally obliged to

drop, their struggles for life giving rise to enthusiastic delight among the surrounding spectators. This is a favourite annual ceremony for the inhabitants of Luchon and its neighbourhood, and local tradition assigns it to a heathen origin." In the midsummer fires formerly kindled on the Place de Grève at Paris it was the custom to burn a basket, barrel, or sack full of live cats, which was hung from a tall mast in the midst of the bonfire; sometimes a fox was burned. The people collected the embers and ashes of the fire and took them home, believing that they brought good luck. The French kings often witnessed these spectacles and even lit the bonfire with their own hands. In 1648 Louis the Fourteenth, crowned with a wreath of roses and carrying a bunch of roses in his hand, kindled the fire, danced at it and partook of the banquet afterwards in the town hall. But this was the last occasion when a monarch presided at the midsummer bonfire in Paris. At Metz midsummer fires were lighted with great pomp on the esplanade, and a dozen cats, enclosed in wicker cages, were burned alive in them, to the amusement of the people. Similarly at Gap, in the department of the High Alps, cats used to be roasted over the midsummer bonfire. In Russia a white cock was sometimes burned in the midsummer bonfire; in Meissen or Thuringia a horse's head used to be thrown into it. Sometimes animals are burned in the spring bonfires. In the Vosges cats were burned on Shrove Tuesday; in Alsace they were thrown into the Easter bonfire. In the department of the Ardennes cats were flung into the bonfires kindled on the first Sunday in Lent; sometimes, by a refinement of cruelty, they were hung over the fire from the end of a pole and roasted alive. "The cat, which represented the devil, could never suffer enough." While the creatures were perishing in the flames, the shepherds guarded their flocks and forced them to leap over the fire, esteeming this an infallible means of preserving them from disease and witchcraft. We have seen that squirrels were sometimes burned in the Easter fire.

Thus it appears that the sacrificial rites of the Celts of ancient Gaul can be traced in the popular festivals of modern Europe. Naturally it is in France, or rather in the wider area comprised within the limits of ancient Gaul, that these rites have left the clearest traces in the customs of burning giants of wicker-work and animals enclosed in wicker-work or baskets. These customs, it will have been remarked, are generally observed at or about midsummer. From this we may infer that the original rites of which these are the degenerate successors were solemnised at midsummer. This inference harmonises with the conclusion suggested by a general survey of European folk-custom, that the midsummer festival must on the whole have been the most widely diffused and the most solemn of all the yearly festivals celebrated by the primitive Aryans in Europe. At the same time we must bear in mind that among the British Celts the chief fire-festivals of the year appear certainly to have been those of Beltane (May Day) and Hallowe'en (the last day of October); and this suggests a doubt whether the Celts of Gaul also may not have celebrated their principal

rites of fire, including their burnt sacrifices of men and animals, at the beginning of May or the beginning of November rather than at Midsummer.

We have still to ask, What is the meaning of such sacrifices? Why were men and animals burnt to death at these festivals? If we are right in interpreting the modern European fire-festivals as attempts to break the power of witchcraft by burning or banning the witches and warlocks, it seems to follow that we must explain the human sacrifices of the Celts in the same manner; that is, we must suppose that the men whom the Druids burnt in wicker-work images were condemned to death on the ground that they were witches or wizards, and that the mode of execution by fire was chosen because burning alive is deemed the surest mode of getting rid of these noxious and dangerous beings. The same explanation would apply to the cattle and wild animals of many kinds which the Celts burned along with the men. They, too, we may conjecture, were supposed to be either under the spell of witchcraft or actually to be the witches and wizards, who had transformed themselves into animals for the purpose of prosecuting their infernal plots against the welfare of their fellow-creatures. This conjecture is confirmed by the observation that the victims most commonly burned in modern bonfires have been cats, and that cats are precisely the animals into which, with the possible exception of hares, witches were most usually supposed to transform themselves. Again, we have seen that serpents and foxes used sometimes to be burnt in the midsummer fires; and Welsh and German witches are reported to have assumed the form both of foxes and serpents. In short, when we remember the great variety of animals whose forms witches can assume at pleasure, it seems easy on this hypothesis to account for the variety of living creatures that have been burnt at festivals both in ancient Gaul and modern Europe; all these victims, we may surmise, were doomed to the flames, not because they were animals, but because they were believed to be witches who had taken the shape of animals for their nefarious purposes. One advantage of explaining the ancient Celtic sacrifices in this way is that it introduces, as it were, a harmony and consistency into the treatment which Europe has meted out to witches from the earliest times down to about two centuries ago, when the growing influence of rationalism discredited the belief in witchcraft and put a stop to the custom of burning witches. Be that as it may, we can now perhaps understand why the Druids believed that the more persons they sentenced to death, the greater would be the fertility of the land. To a modern reader the connexion at first sight may not be obvious between the activity of the hangman and the productivity of the earth. But a little reflection may satisfy him that when the criminals who perish at the stake or on the gallows are witches, whose delight it is to blight the crops of the farmer or to lay them low under storms of hail, the execution of these wretches is really calculated to ensure an abundant harvest by removing one of the

principal causes which paralyse the efforts and blast the hopes of the husbandman.

The Druidical sacrifices which we are considering were explained in a different way by W. Mannhardt. He supposed that the men whom the Druids burned in wicker-work images represented the spirits of vegetation, and accordingly that the custom of burning them was a magical ceremony intended to secure the necessary sunshine for the crops. Similarly, he seems to have inclined to the view that the animals which used to be burnt in the bonfires represented the corn-spirit, which, as we saw in an earlier part of this work, is often supposed to assume the shape of an animal. This theory is no doubt tenable, and the great authority of W. Mannhardt entitles it to careful consideration. I adopted it in former editions of this book; but on reconsideration it seems to me on the whole to be less probable than the theory that the men and animals burnt in the fires perished in the character of witches. This latter view is strongly supported by the testimony of the people who celebrate the fire-festivals, since a popular name for the custom of kindling the fires is "burning the witches," effigies of witches are sometimes consumed in the flames, and the fires, their embers, or their ashes are supposed to furnish protection against witchcraft. On the other hand there is little to show that the effigies or the animals burnt in the fires are regarded by the people as representatives of the vegetation-spirit, and that the bonfires are sun-charms. With regard to serpents in particular, which used to be burnt in the midsummer fire at Luchon, I am not aware of any certain evidence that in Europe snakes have been regarded as embodiments of the tree-spirit or corn-spirit, though in other parts of the world the conception appears to be not unknown. Whereas the popular faith in the transformation of witches into animals is so general and deeply rooted, and the fear of these uncanny beings is so strong, that it seems safer to suppose that the cats and other animals which were burnt in the fire suffered death as embodiments of witches than that they perished as representatives of vegetation-spirits.

CHAPTER LXV

BALDER AND THE MISTLETOE

THE reader may remember that the preceding account of the popular fire-festivals of Europe was suggested by the myth of the Norse god Balder, who is said to have been slain by a branch of mistletoe and burnt in a great fire. We have now to enquire how far the customs which have been passed in review help to shed light on the myth. In this enquiry it may be convenient to begin with the mistletoe, the instrument of Balder's death.

From time immemorial the mistletoe has been the object of super-

stitious veneration in Europe. It was worshipped by the Druids, as we learn from a famous passage of Pliny. After enumerating the different kinds of mistletoe, he proceeds: "In treating of this subject, the admiration in which the mistletoe is held throughout Gaul ought not to pass unnoticed. The Druids, for so they call their wizards, esteem nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree on which it grows, provided only that the tree is an oak. But apart from this they choose oak-woods for their sacred groves and perform no sacred rites without oak-leaves; so that the very name of Druids may be regarded as a Greek appellation derived from their worship of the oak. For they believe that whatever grows on these trees is sent from heaven, and is a sign that the tree has been chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe is very rarely to be met with; but when it is found, they gather it with solemn ceremony. This they do above all on the sixth day of the moon, from whence they date the beginnings of their months, of their years, and of their thirty years' cycle, because by the sixth day the moon has plenty of vigour and has not run half its course. After due preparations have been made for a sacrifice and a feast under the tree, they hail it as the universal healer and bring to the spot two white bulls, whose horns have never been bound before. A priest clad in a white robe climbs the tree and with a golden sickle cuts the mistletoe, which is caught in a white cloth. Then they sacrifice the victims, praying that God may make his own gift to prosper with those upon whom he has bestowed it. They believe that a potion prepared from mistletoe will make barren animals to bring forth, and that the plant is a remedy against all poison."

In another passage Pliny tells us that in medicine the mistletoe which grows on an oak was esteemed the most efficacious, and that its efficacy was by some superstitious people supposed to be increased if the plant was gathered on the first day of the moon without the use of iron, and if when gathered it was not allowed to touch the earth; oak-mistletoe thus obtained was deemed a cure for epilepsy; carried about by women it assisted them to conceive; and it healed ulcers most effectually, if only the sufferer chewed a piece of the plant and laid another piece on the sore. Yet, again, he says that mistletoe was supposed, like vinegar and an egg, to be an excellent means of extinguishing a fire.

If in these latter passages Pliny refers, as he apparently does, to the beliefs current among his contemporaries in Italy, it will follow that the Druids and the Italians were to some extent agreed as to the valuable properties possessed by mistletoe which grows on an oak; both of them deemed it an effectual remedy for a number of ailments, and both of them ascribed to it a quickening virtue, the Druids believing that a potion prepared from mistletoe would fertilise barren cattle, and the Italians holding that a piece of mistletoe carried about by a woman would help her to conceive a child. Further, both peoples thought that if the plant were to exert its medicinal properties it must be gathered in a certain way and at a certain time. It might not be

cut with iron, hence the Druids cut it with gold; and it might not touch the earth, hence the Druids caught it in a white cloth. In choosing the time for gathering the plant, both peoples were determined by observation of the moon; only they differed as to the particular day of the moon, the Italians preferring the first, and the Druids the sixth.

With these beliefs of the ancient Gauls and Italians as to the wonderful medicinal properties of mistletoe we may compare the similar beliefs of the modern Aino of Japan. We read that they, "like many nations of the Northern origin, hold the mistletoe in peculiar veneration. They look upon it as a medicine, good in almost every disease, and it is sometimes taken in food and at others separately as a decoction. The leaves are used in preference to the berries, the latter being of too sticky a nature for general purposes. . . . But many, too, suppose this plant to have the power of making the gardens bear plentifully. When used for this purpose, the leaves are cut up into fine pieces, and, after having been prayed over, are sown with the millet and other seeds, a little also being eaten with the food. Barren women have also been known to eat the mistletoe, in order to be made to bear children. That mistletoe which grows upon the willow is supposed to have the greatest efficacy. This is because the willow is looked upon by them as being an especially sacred tree."

Thus the Aino agree with the Druids in regarding mistletoe as a cure for almost every disease, and they agree with the ancient Italians that applied to women it helps them to bear children. Again, the Druidical notion that the mistletoe was an "all-healer" or panacea may be compared with a notion entertained by the Walos of Senegambia. These people "have much veneration for a sort of mistletoe, which they call *tob;* they carry leaves of it on their persons when they go to war as a preservative against wounds, just as if the leaves were real talismans (*gris-gris*)." The French writer who records this practice adds: "Is it not very curious that the mistletoe should be in this part of Africa what it was in the superstitions of the Gauls? This prejudice, common to the two countries, may have the same origin; blacks and whites will doubtless have seen, each of them for themselves, something supernatural in a plant which grows and flourishes without having roots in the earth. May they not have believed, in fact, that it was a plant fallen from the sky, a gift of the divinity?"

This suggestion as to the origin of the superstition is strongly confirmed by the Druidical belief, reported by Pliny, that whatever grew on an oak was sent from heaven and was a sign that the tree had been chosen by the god himself. Such a belief explains why the Druids cut the mistletoe, not with a common knife, but with a golden sickle, and why, when cut, it was not suffered to touch the earth; probably they thought that the celestial plant would have been profaned and its marvellous virtue lost by contact with the ground. With the ritual observed by the Druids in cutting the mistletoe we may compare the ritual which in Cambodia is prescribed in a similar

case. They say that when you see an orchid growing as a parasite on a tamarind tree, you should dress in white, take a new earthenware pot, then climb the tree at noon, break off the plant, put it in the pot and let the pot fall to the ground. After that you make in the pot a decoction which confers the gift of invulnerability. Thus just as in Africa the leaves of one parasitic plant are supposed to render the wearer invulnerable, so in Cambodia a decoction made from another parasitic plant is considered to render the same service to such as make use of it, whether by drinking or washing. We may conjecture that in both places the notion of invulnerability is suggested by the position of the plant, which, occupying a place of comparative security above the ground, appears to promise to its fortunate possessor a similar security from some of the ills that beset the life of man on earth. We have already met with examples of the store which the primitive mind sets on such vantage grounds.

Whatever may be the origin of these beliefs and practices concerning the mistletoe, certain it is that some of them have their analogies in the folk-lore of modern European peasants. For example, it is laid down as a rule in various parts of Europe that mistletoe may not be cut in the ordinary way but must be shot or knocked down with stones from the tree on which it is growing. Thus, in the Swiss canton of Aargau "all parasitic plants are esteemed in a certain sense holy by the country folk, but most particularly so the mistletoe growing on an oak. They ascribe great powers to it, but shrink from cutting it off in the usual manner. Instead of that they procure it in the following manner. When the sun is in Sagittarius and the moon is on the wane, on the first, third, or fourth day before the new moon, one ought to shoot down with an arrow the mistletoe of an oak and to catch it with the left hand as it falls. Such mistletoe is a remedy for every ailment of children." Here among the Swiss peasants, as among the Druids of old, special virtue is ascribed to mistletoe which grows on an oak: it may not be cut in the usual way: it must be caught as it falls to the ground; and it is esteemed a panacea for all diseases, at least of children. In Sweden, also, it is a popular superstition that if mistletoe is to possess its peculiar virtue, it must either be shot down out of the oak or knocked down with stones. Similarly, "so late as the early part of the nineteenth century, people in Wales believed that for the mistletoe to have any power, it must be shot or struck down with stones off the tree where it grew."

Again, in respect of the healing virtues of mistletoe the opinion of modern peasants, and even of the learned, has to some extent agreed with that of the ancients. The Druids appear to have called the plant, or perhaps the oak on which it grew, the "all-healer"; and "all-healer" is said to be still a name of the mistletoe in the modern Celtic speech of Brittany, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. On St. John's morning (Midsummer morning) peasants of Piedmont and Lombardy go out to search the oak-leaves for the "oil of St. John," which is supposed to heal all wounds made with cutting instruments.

Originally, perhaps, the "oil of St. John" was simply the mistletoe, or a decoction made from it. For in Holstein the mistletoe, especially oak-mistletoe, is still regarded as a panacea for green wounds and as a sure charm to secure success in hunting; and at Lacaune, in the south of France, the old Druidical belief in the mistletoe as an antidote to all poisons still survives among the peasantry; they apply the plant to the stomach of the sufferer or give him a decoction of it to drink. Again, the ancient belief that mistletoe is a cure for epilepsy has survived in modern times not only among the ignorant but among the learned. Thus in Sweden persons afflicted with the falling sickness think they can ward off attacks of the malady by carrying about with them a knife which has a handle of oak mistletoe; and in Germany for a similar purpose pieces of mistletoe used to be hung round the necks of children. In the French province of Bourbonnais a popular remedy for epilepsy is a decoction of mistletoe which has been gathered on an oak on St. John's Day and boiled with rye-flour. So at Bottesford in Lincolnshire a decoction of mistletoe is supposed to be a palliative for this terrible disease. Indeed mistletoe was recommended as a remedy for the falling sickness by high medical authorities in England and Holland down to the eighteenth century.

However, the opinion of the medical profession as to the curative virtues of mistletoe has undergone a radical alteration. Whereas the Druids thought that mistletoe cured everything, modern doctors appear to think that it cures nothing. If they are right, we must conclude that the ancient and widespread faith in the medicinal virtue of mistletoe is a pure superstition based on nothing better than the fanciful inferences which ignorance has drawn from the parasitic nature of the plant, its position high up on the branch of a tree seeming to protect it from the dangers to which plants and animals are subject on the surface of the ground. From this point of view we can perhaps understand why mistletoe has so long and so persistently been prescribed as a cure for the falling sickness. As mistletoe cannot fall to the ground because it is rooted on the branch of a tree high above the earth, it seems to follow as a necessary consequence that an epileptic patient cannot possibly fall down in a fit so long as he carries a piece of mistletoe in his pocket or a decoction of mistletoe in his stomach. Such a train of reasoning would probably be regarded even now as cogent by a large portion of the human species.

Again the ancient Italian opinion that mistletoe extinguishes fire appears to be shared by Swedish peasants, who hang up bunches of oak-mistletoe on the ceilings of their rooms as a protection against harm in general and conflagration in particular. A hint as to the way in which mistletoe comes to be possessed of this property is furnished by the epithet "thunder-besom," which people of the Aargau canton in Switzerland apply to the plant. For a thunder-besom is a shaggy, bushy excrescence on branches of trees, which is popularly believed to be produced by a flash of lightning; hence in Bohemia a thunder-besom burnt in the fire protects the house against being struck by

a thunder-bolt. Being itself a product of lightning it naturally serves, on homoeopathic principles, as a protection against lightning, in fact as a kind of lightning-conductor. Hence the fire which mistletoe in Sweden is designed especially to avert from houses may be fire kindled by lightning; though no doubt the plant is equally effective against conflagration in general.

Again, mistletoe acts as a master-key as well as a lightning-conductor; for it is said to open all locks. But perhaps the most precious of all the virtues of mistletoe is that it affords efficient protection against sorcery and witchcraft. That, no doubt, is the reason why in Austria a twig of mistletoe is laid on the threshold as a preventive of nightmare; and it may be the reason why in the north of England they say that if you wish your dairy to thrive you should give your bunch of mistletoe to the first cow that calves after New Year's Day, for it is well known that nothing is so fatal to milk and butter as witchcraft. Similarly in Wales, for the sake of ensuring good luck to the dairy, people used to give a branch of mistletoe to the first cow that gave birth to a calf after the first hour of the New Year; and in rural districts of Wales, where mistletoe abounded, there was always a profusion of it in the farmhouses. When mistletoe was scarce, Welsh farmers used to say, "No mistletoe, no luck"; but if there was a fine crop of mistletoe, they expected a fine crop of corn. In Sweden mistletoe is diligently sought after on St. John's Eve, the people "believing it to be, in a high degree, possessed of mystic qualities; and that if a sprig of it be attached to the ceiling of the dwelling-house, the horse's stall, or the cow's crib, the Troll will then be powerless to injure either man or beast."

With regard to the time when the mistletoe should be gathered opinions have varied. The Druids gathered it above all on the sixth day of the moon, the ancient Italians apparently on the first day of the moon. In modern times some have preferred the full moon of March and others the waning moon of winter when the sun is in Sagittarius. But the favourite time would seem to be Midsummer Eve or Midsummer Day. We have seen that both in France and Sweden special virtues are ascribed to mistletoe gathered at Midsummer. The rule in Sweden is that "mistletoe must be cut on the night of Midsummer Eve when sun and moon stand in the sign of their might." Again, in Wales it was believed that a sprig of mistletoe gathered on St. John's Eve (Midsummer Eve), or at any time before the berries appeared, would induce dreams of omen, both good and bad, if it were placed under the pillow of the sleeper. Thus mistletoe is one of the many plants whose magical or medicinal virtues are believed to culminate with the culmination of the sun on the longest day of the year. Hence it seems reasonable to conjecture that in the eyes of the Druids, also, who revered the plant so highly, the sacred mistletoe may have acquired a double portion of its mystic qualities at the solstice in June, and that accordingly they may have regularly cut it with solemn ceremony on Midsummer Eve.

Be that as it may, certain it is that the mistletoe, the instrument

of Balder's death, has been regularly gathered for the sake of its mystic qualities on Midsummer Eve in Scandinavia, Balder's home. The plant is found commonly growing on pear-trees, oaks, and other trees in thick damp woods throughout the more temperate parts of Sweden. Thus one of the two main incidents of Balder's myth is reproduced in the great midsummer festival of Scandinavia. But the other main incident of the myth, the burning of Balder's body on a pyre, has also its counterpart in the bonfires which still blaze, or blazed till lately, in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden on Midsummer Eve. It does not appear, indeed, that any effigy is burned in these bonfires; but the burning of an effigy is a feature which might easily drop out after its meaning was forgotten. And the name of Balder's balefires (*Balder's Bălar*), by which these midsummer fires were formerly known in Sweden, puts their connexion with Balder beyond the reach of doubt, and makes it probable that in former times either a living representative or an effigy of Balder was annually burned in them. Midsummer was the season sacred to Balder, and the Swedish poet Tegner, in placing the burning of Balder at midsummer, may very well have followed an old tradition that the summer solstice was the time when the good god came to his untimely end.

Thus it has been shown that the leading incidents of the Balder myth have their counterparts in those fire-festivals of our European peasantry which undoubtedly date from a time long prior to the introduction of Christianity. The pretence of throwing the victim chosen by lot into the Beltane fire, and the similar treatment of the man, the future Green Wolf, at the midsummer bonfire in Normandy, may naturally be interpreted as traces of an older custom of actually burning human beings on these occasions; and the green dress of the Green Wolf, coupled with the leafy envelope of the young fellow who trod out the midsummer fire at Moosheim, seems to hint that the persons who perished at these festivals did so in the character of tree-spirits or deities of vegetation. From all this we may reasonably infer that in the Balder myth on the one hand, and the fire-festivals and custom of gathering mistletoe on the other hand, we have, as it were, the two broken and dissevered halves of an original whole. In other words, we may assume with some degree of probability that the myth of Balder's death was not merely a myth, that is, a description of physical phenomena in imagery borrowed from human life, but that it was at the same time the story which people told to explain why they annually burned a human representative of the god and cut the mistletoe with solemn ceremony. If I am right, the story of Balder's tragic end formed, so to say, the text of the sacred drama which was acted year by year as a magical rite to cause the sun to shine, trees to grow, crops to thrive, and to guard man and beast from the baleful arts of fairies and trolls, of witches and warlocks. The tale belonged, in short, to that class of nature myths which are meant to be supplemented by ritual; here, as so often, myth stood to magic in the relation of theory to practice.

But if the victims—the human Balders—who died by fire, whether in spring or at midsummer, were put to death as living embodiments of tree-spirits or deities of vegetation, it would seem that Balder himself must have been a tree-spirit or deity of vegetation. It becomes desirable, therefore, to determine, if we can, the particular kind of tree or trees, of which a personal representative was burned at the fire-festivals. For we may be quite sure that it was not as a representative of vegetation in general that the victim suffered death. The idea of vegetation in general is too abstract to be primitive. Most probably the victim at first represented a particular kind of sacred tree. But of all European trees none has such claims as the oak to be considered as pre-eminently the sacred tree of the Aryans. We have seen that its worship is attested for all the great branches of the Aryan stock in Europe; hence we may certainly conclude that the tree was venerated by the Aryans in common before the dispersion, and that their primitive home must have lain in a land which was clothed with forests of oak.

Now, considering the primitive character and remarkable similarity of the fire-festivals observed by all the branches of the Aryan race in Europe, we may infer that these festivals form part of the common stock of religious observances which the various peoples carried with them in their wanderings from their old home. But, if I am right, an essential feature of those primitive fire-festivals was the burning of a man who represented the tree-spirit. In view, then, of the place occupied by the oak in the religion of the Aryans, the presumption is that the tree so represented at the fire-festivals must originally have been the oak. So far as the Celts and Lithuanians are concerned, this conclusion will perhaps hardly be contested. But both for them and for the Germans it is confirmed by a remarkable piece of religious conservatism. The most primitive method known to man of producing fire is by rubbing two pieces of wood against each other till they ignite; and we have seen that this method is still used in Europe for kindling sacred fires such as the need-fire, and that most probably it was formerly resorted to at all the fire-festivals under discussion. Now it is sometimes required that the need-fire, or other sacred fire, should be made by the friction of a particular kind of wood; and when the kind of wood is prescribed, whether among Celts, Germans, or Slavs, that wood appears to be generally the oak. But if the sacred fire was regularly kindled by the friction of oak-wood, we may infer that originally the fire was also fed with the same material. In point of fact, it appears that the perpetual fire of Vesta at Rome was fed with oak-wood, and that oak-wood was the fuel consumed in the perpetual fire which burned under the sacred oak at the great Lithuanian sanctuary of Romove. Further, that oak-wood was formerly the fuel burned in the midsummer fires may perhaps be inferred from the custom, said to be still observed by peasants in many mountain districts of Germany, of making up the cottage fire on Midsummer Day with a heavy block of oak-wood. The block

is so arranged that it smoulders slowly and is not finally reduced to charcoal till the expiry of a year. Then upon next Midsummer Day the charred embers of the old log are removed to make room for the new one, and are mixed with the seed-corn or scattered about the garden. This is believed to guard the food cooked on the hearth from witchcraft, to preserve the luck of the house, to promote the growth of the crops, and to keep them from blight and vermin. Thus the custom is almost exactly parallel to that of the Yule-log, which in parts of Germany, France, England, Serbia, and other Slavonic lands was commonly of oak-wood. The general conclusion is, that at those periodic or occasional ceremonies the ancient Aryans both kindled and fed the fire with the sacred oak-wood.

But if at these solemn rites the fire was regularly made of oak-wood, it follows that any man who was burned in it as a personification of the tree-spirit could have represented no tree but the oak. The sacred oak was thus burned in duplicate; the wood of the tree was consumed in the fire, and along with it was consumed a living man as a personification of the oak-spirit. The conclusion thus drawn for the European Aryans in general is confirmed in its special application to the Scandinavians by the relation in which amongst them the mistletoe appears to have stood to the burning of the victim in the midsummer fire. We have seen that among Scandinavians it has been customary to gather the mistletoe at midsummer. But so far as appears on the face of this custom, there is nothing to connect it with the midsummer fires in which human victims or effigies of them were burned. Even if the fire, as seems probable, was originally always made with oak-wood, why should it have been necessary to pull the mistletoe? The last link between the midsummer customs of gathering the mistletoe and lighting the bonfires is supplied by Balder's myth, which can hardly be disjoined from the customs in question. The myth suggests that a vital connexion may once have been believed to subsist between the mistletoe and the human representative of the oak who was burned in the fire. According to the myth, Balder could be killed by nothing in heaven or earth except the mistletoe; and so long as the mistletoe remained on the oak, he was not only immortal but invulnerable. Now, if we suppose that Balder was the oak, the origin of the myth becomes intelligible. The mistletoe was viewed as the seat of life of the oak, and so long as it was uninjured nothing could kill or even wound the oak. The conception of the mistletoe as the seat of life of the oak would naturally be suggested to primitive people by the observation that while the oak is deciduous, the mistletoe which grows on it is evergreen. In winter the sight of its fresh foliage among the bare branches must have been hailed by the worshippers of the tree as a sign that the divine life which had ceased to animate the branches yet survived in the mistletoe, as the heart of a sleeper still beats when his body is motionless. Hence when the god had to be killed—when the sacred tree had to be burnt—it was necessary to begin by breaking off the

mistletoe. For so long as the mistletoe remained intact, the oak (so people might think) was invulnerable; all the blows of their knives and axes would glance harmless from its surface. But once tear from the oak its sacred heart—the mistletoe—and the tree nodded to its fall. And when in later times the spirit of the oak came to be represented by a living man, it was logically necessary to suppose that, like the tree he personated, he could neither be killed nor wounded so long as the mistletoe remained uninjured. The pulling of the mistletoe was thus at once the signal and the cause of his death.

On this view the invulnerable Balder is neither more nor less than a personification of a mistletoe-bearing oak. The interpretation is confirmed by what seems to have been an ancient Italian belief, that the mistletoe can be destroyed neither by fire nor water; for if the parasite is thus deemed indestructible, it might easily be supposed to communicate its own indestructibility to the tree on which it grows, so long as the two remain in conjunction. Or, to put the same idea in mythical form, we might tell how the kindly god of the oak had his life securely deposited in the imperishable mistletoe which grew among the branches; how accordingly so long as the mistletoe kept its place there, the deity himself remained invulnerable; and how at last a cunning foe, let into the secret of the god's invulnerability, tore the mistletoe from the oak, thereby killing the oak-god and afterwards burning his body in a fire which could have made no impression on him so long as the incombustible parasite retained its seat among the boughs.

But since the idea of a being whose life is thus, in a sense, outside himself, must be strange to many readers, and has, indeed, not yet been recognised in its full bearing on primitive superstition, it will be worth while to illustrate it by examples drawn both from story and custom. The result will be to show that, in assuming this idea as the explanation of Balder's relation to the mistletoe, I assume a principle which is deeply engraved on the mind of primitive man.

CHAPTER LXVI

THE EXTERNAL SOUL IN FOLK-TALES

In a former part of this work we saw that, in the opinion of primitive people, the soul may temporarily absent itself from the body without causing death. Such temporary absences of the soul are often believed to involve considerable risk, since the wandering soul is liable to a variety of mishaps at the hands of enemies, and so forth. But there is another aspect to this power of disengaging the soul from the body. If only the safety of the soul can be ensured during its absence, there is no reason why the soul should not continue absent for an indefinite time; indeed a man may, on a pure calculation of personal safety,

desire that his soul should never return to his body. Unable to conceive of life abstractly as a "permanent possibility of sensation" or a "continuous adjustment of internal arrangements to external relations," the savage thinks of it as a concrete material thing of a definite bulk, capable of being seen and handled, kept in a box or jar, and liable to be bruised, fractured, or smashed in pieces. It is not needful that the life, so conceived, should be in the man; it may be absent from his body and still continue to animate him by virtue of a sort of sympathy or action at a distance. So long as this object which he calls his life or soul remains unharmed, the man is well; if it is injured, he suffers; if it is destroyed, he dies. Or, to put it otherwise, when a man is ill or dies, the fact is explained by saying that the material object called his life or soul, whether it be in his body or out of it, has either sustained injury or been destroyed. But there may be circumstances in which, if the life or soul remains in the man, it stands a greater chance of sustaining injury than if it were stowed away in some safe and secret place. Accordingly, in such circumstances, primitive man takes his soul out of his body and deposits it for security in some snug spot, intending to replace it in his body when the danger is past. Or if he should discover some place of absolute security, he may be content to leave his soul there permanently. The advantage of this is that, so long as the soul remains unharmed in the place where he has deposited it, the man himself is immortal; nothing can kill his body, since his life is not in it.

Evidence of this primitive belief is furnished by a class of folk-tales of which the Norse story of "The giant who had no heart in his body" is perhaps the best-known example. Stories of this kind are widely diffused over the world, and from their number and the variety of incident and of details in which the leading idea is embodied, we may infer that the conception of an external soul is one which has had a powerful hold on the minds of men at an early stage of history. For folk-tales are a faithful reflection of the world as it appeared to the primitive mind; and we may be sure that any idea which commonly occurs in them, however absurd it may seem to us, must once have been an ordinary article of belief. This assurance, so far as it concerns the supposed power of disengaging the soul from the body for a longer or shorter time, is amply corroborated by a comparison of the folk-tales in question with the actual beliefs and practices of savages. To this we shall return after some specimens of the tales have been given. The specimens will be selected with a view of illustrating both the characteristic features and the wide diffusion of this class of tales.

In the first place, the story of the external soul is told, in various forms, by all Aryan peoples from Hindoostan to the Hebrides. A very common form of it is this: A warlock, giant, or other fairyland being is invulnerable and immortal because he keeps his soul hidden far away in some secret place; but a fair princess, whom he holds enthralled in his enchanted castle, wiles his secret from him and reveals it to the hero, who seeks out the warlock's soul, heart, life, or death

(as it is variously called), and by destroying it, simultaneously kills the warlock. Thus a Hindoo story tells how a magician called Punchkin held a queen captive for twelve years, and would fain marry her, but she would not have him. At last the queen's son came to rescue her, and the two plotted together to kill Punchkin. So the queen spoke the magician fair, and pretended that she had at last made up her mind to marry him. "And do tell me," she said, "are you quite immortal? Can death never touch you? And are you too great an enchanter ever to feel human suffering?" "It is true," he said, "that I am not as others. Far, far away, hundreds of thousands of miles from this, there lies a desolate country covered with thick jungle. In the midst of the jungle grows a circle of palm trees, and in the centre of the circle stand six chattees full of water, piled one above another: below the sixth chattee is a small cage, which contains a little green parrot;—on the life of the parrot depends my life;—and if the parrot is killed I must die. It is, however," he added, "impossible that the parrot should sustain any injury, both on account of the inaccessibility of the country, and because, by my appointment, many thousand genii surround the palm trees, and kill all who approach the place." But the queen's young son overcame all difficulties, and got possession of the parrot. He brought it to the door of the magician's palace, and began playing with it. Punchkin, the magician, saw him, and, coming out, tried to persuade the boy to give him the parrot. "Give me my parrot!" cried Punchkin. Then the boy took hold of the parrot and tore off one of his wings; and as he did so the magician's right arm fell off. Punchkin then stretched out his left arm, crying, "Give me my parrot!" The prince pulled off the parrot's second wing, and the magician's left arm tumbled off. "Give me my parrot!" cried he, and fell on his knees. The prince pulled off the parrot's right leg, the magician's right leg fell off; the prince pulled off the parrot's left leg, down fell the magician's left. Nothing remained of him except the trunk and the head; but still he rolled his eyes, and cried, "Give me my parrot!" "Take your parrot, then," cried the boy; and with that he wrung the bird's neck, and threw it at the magician; and, as he did so, Punchkin's head twisted round, and, with a fearful groan, he died! In another Hindoo tale an ogre is asked by his daughter, "Papa, where do you keep your soul?" "Sixteen miles away from this place," he said, "is a tree. Round the tree are tigers, and bears, and scorpions, and snakes; on the top of the tree is a very great fat snake; on his head is a little cage; in the cage is a bird; and my soul is in that bird." The end of the ogre is like that of the magician in the previous tale. As the bird's wings and legs are torn off, the ogre's arms and legs drop off; and when its neck is wrung he falls down dead. In a Bengalee story it is said that all the ogres dwell in Ceylon, and that all their lives are in a single lemon. A boy cuts the lemon in pieces, and all the ogres die.

In a Siamese or Cambodian story, probably derived from India, we are told that Thossakan or Ravana, the King of Ceylon, was able

by magic art to take his soul out of his body and leave it in a box at home, while he went to the wars. Thus he was invulnerable in battle. When he was about to give battle to Rama, he deposited his soul with a hermit called Fire-eye, who was to keep it safe for him. So in the fight Rama was astounded to see that his arrows struck the king without wounding him. But one of Rama's allies, knowing the secret of the king's invulnerability, transformed himself by magic into the likeness of the king, and going to the hermit asked back his soul. On receiving it he soared up into the air and flew to Rama, brandishing the box and squeezing it so hard that all the breath left the King of Ceylon's body, and he died. In a Bengalee story a prince going into a far country planted with his own hands a tree in the court-yard of his father's palace, and said to his parents, "This tree is my life. When you see the tree green and fresh, then know that it is well with me; when you see the tree fade in some parts, then know that I am in an ill case; and when you see the whole tree fade, then know that I am dead and gone." In another Indian tale a prince, setting forth on his travels, left behind him a barley plant, with instructions that it should be carefully tended and watched; for if it flourished, he would be alive and well, but if it drooped, then some mischance was about to happen to him. And so it fell out. For the prince was beheaded, and as his head rolled off, the barley plant snapped in two and the ear of barley fell to the ground.

In Greek tales, ancient and modern, the idea of an external soul is not uncommon. When Meleager was seven days old, the Fates appeared to his mother and told her that Meleager would die when the brand which was blazing on the hearth had burnt down. So his mother snatched the brand from the fire and kept it in a box. But in after-years, being enraged at her son for slaying her brothers, she burnt the brand in the fire and Meleager expired in agonies, as if flames were preying on his vitals. Again, Nisus King of Megara had a purple or golden hair on the middle of his head, and it was fated that whenever the hair was pulled out the king should die. When Megara was besieged by the Cretans, the king's daughter Scylla fell in love with Minos, their king, and pulled out the fatal hair from her father's head. So he died. In a modern Greek folk-tale a man's strength lies in three golden hairs on his head. When his mother pulls them out, he grows weak and timid and is slain by his enemies. In another modern Greek story the life of an enchanter is bound up with three doves which are in the belly of a wild boar. When the first dove is killed, the magician grows sick; when the second is killed, he grows very sick; and when the third is killed, he dies. In another Greek story of the same sort an ogre's strength is in three singing birds which are in a wild boar. The hero kills two of the birds, and then coming to the ogre's house finds him lying on the ground in great pain. He shows the third bird to the ogre, who begs that the hero will either let it fly away or give it to him to eat. But the hero wrings the bird's neck, and the ogre dies on the spot.

In a modern Roman version of "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," the magician tells the princess, whom he holds captive in a floating rock in mid-ocean, that he will never die. The princess reports this to the prince her husband, who has come to rescue her. The prince replies, "It is impossible but that there should be some one thing or other that is fatal to him; ask him what that one fatal thing is." So the princess asked the magician, and he told her that in the wood was a hydra with seven heads; in the middle head of the hydra was a leveret, in the head of the leveret was a bird, in the bird's head was a precious stone, and if this stone were put under his pillow he would die. The prince procured the stone, and the princess laid it under the magician's pillow. No sooner did the enchanter lay his head on the pillow than he gave three terrible yells, turned himself round and round three times, and died.

Stories of the same sort are current among Slavonic peoples. Thus a Russian story tells how a warlock called Koshchei the Deathless carried off a princess and kept her prisoner in his golden castle. However, a prince made up to her one day as she was walking alone and disconsolate in the castle garden, and cheered by the prospect of escaping with him she went to the warlock and coaxed him with false and flattering words, saying, "My dearest friend, tell me, I pray you, will you never die?" "Certainly not," says he. "Well," says she, "and where is your death? is it in your dwelling?" "To be sure it is," says he, "it is in the broom under the threshold." Thereupon the princess seized the broom and threw it on the fire, but although the broom burned, the deathless Koshchei remained alive; indeed not so much as a hair of him was singed. Balked in her first attempt, the artful hussy pouted and said, "You do not love me true, for you have not told me where your death is; yet I am not angry, but love you with all my heart." With these fawning words she besought the warlock to tell her truly where his death was. So he laughed and said, "Why do you wish to know? Well then, out of love I will tell you where it lies. In a certain field there stand three green oaks, and under the roots of the largest oak is a worm, and if ever this worm is found and crushed, that instant I shall die." When the princess heard these words, she went straight to her lover and told him all; and he searched till he found the oaks and dug up the worm and crushed it. Then he hurried to the warlock's castle, but only to learn from the princess that the warlock was still alive. Then she fell to wheedling and coaxing Koshchei once more, and this time, overcome by her wiles, he opened his heart to her and told her the truth. "My death," said he, "is far from here and hard to find, on the wide ocean. In that sea is an island, and on the island there grows a green oak, and beneath the oak is an iron chest, and in the chest is a small basket, and in the basket is a hare, and in the hare is a duck, and in the duck is an egg; and he who finds the egg and breaks it, kills me at the same time." The prince naturally procured the fateful egg and with it in his hands he confronted the deathless warlock. The monster

would have killed him, but the prince began to squeeze the egg. At that the warlock shrieked with pain, and turning to the false princess, who stood by smirking and smiling, "Was it not out of love for you," said he, "that I told you where my death was? And is this the return you make to me?" With that he grabbed at his sword, which hung from a peg on the wall; but before he could reach it, the prince had crushed the egg, and sure enough the deathless warlock found his death at the same moment. "In one of the descriptions of Koshchei's death, he is said to be killed by a blow on the forehead inflicted by the mysterious egg—that last link in the magic chain by which his life is darkly bound. In another version of the same story, but told of a snake, the fatal blow is struck by a small stone found in the yolk of an egg, which is inside a duck, which is inside a hare, which is inside a stone, which is on an island."

Amongst peoples of the Teutonic stock stories of the external soul are not wanting. In a tale told by the Saxons of Transylvania it is said that a young man shot at a witch again and again. The bullets went clean through her but did her no harm, and she only laughed and mocked at him. "Silly earthworm," she cried, "shoot as much as you like. It does me no harm. For know that my life resides not in me but far, far away. In a mountain is a pond, on the pond swims a duck, in the duck is an egg, in the egg burns a light, that light is my life. If you could put out that light, my life would be at an end. But that can never, never be." However, the young man got hold of the egg, smashed it, and put out the light, and with it the witch's life went out also. In a German story a cannibal called Body without Soul or Soulless keeps his soul in a box, which stands on a rock in the middle of the Red Sea. A soldier gets possession of the box and goes with it to Soulless, who begs the soldier to give him back his soul. But the soldier opens the box, takes out the soul, and flings it backward over his head. At the same moment the cannibal drops dead to the ground.

In another German story an old warlock lives with a damsel all alone in the midst of a vast and gloomy wood. She fears that being old he may die and leave her alone in the forest. But he reassures her. "Dear child," he said, "I cannot die, and I have no heart in my breast." But she importuned him to tell her where his heart was. So he said, "Far, far from here in an unknown and lonesome land stands a great church. The church is well secured with iron doors, and round about it flows a broad deep moat. In the church flies a bird and in the bird is my heart. So long as the bird lives, I live. It cannot die of itself, and no one can catch it; therefore I cannot die, and you need have no anxiety." However the young man, whose bride the damsel was to have been before the warlock spirited her away, contrived to reach the church and catch the bird. He brought it to the damsel, who stowed him and it away under the warlock's bed. Soon the old warlock came home. He was ailing, and said so. The girl wept and said, "Alas, daddy is dying; he has a heart in his breast

after all." "Child," replied the warlock, "hold your tongue. I *can't* die. It will soon pass over." At that the young man under the bed gave the bird a gentle squeeze; and as he did so, the old warlock felt very unwell and sat down. Then the young man gripped the bird tighter, and the warlock fell senseless from his chair. "Now squeeze him dead," cried the damsel. Her lover obeyed, and when the bird was dead, the old warlock also lay dead on the floor.

In the Norse tale of "the giant who had no heart in his body," the giant tells the captive princess, "Far, far away in a lake lies an island, on that island stands a church, in that church is a well, in that well swims a duck, in that duck there is an egg, and in that egg there lies my heart." The hero of the tale, with the help of some animals to whom he had been kind, obtains the egg and squeezes it, at which the giant screams piteously and begs for his life. But the hero breaks the egg in pieces and the giant at once bursts. In another Norse story a hill-ogre tells the captive princess that she will never be able to return home unless she finds the grain of sand which lies under the ninth tongue of the ninth head of a certain dragon; but if that grain of sand were to come over the rock in which the ogres live, they would all burst "and the rock itself would become a gilded palace, and the lake green meadows." The hero finds the grain of sand and takes it to the top of the high rock in which the ogres live. So all the ogres burst and the rest falls out as one of the ogres had foretold.

In a Celtic tale, recorded in the West Highlands of Scotland, a giant is questioned by a captive queen as to where he keeps his soul. At last, after deceiving her several times, he confides to her the fatal secret: "There is a great flagstone under the threshold. There is a wether under the flag. There is a duck in the wether's belly, and an egg in the belly of the duck, and it is in the egg that my soul is." On the morrow when the giant was gone, the queen contrived to get possession of the egg and crushed it in her hands, and at that very moment the giant, who was coming home in the dusk, fell down dead. In another Celtic tale, a sea beast has carried off a king's daughter, and an old smith declares that there is no way of killing the beast but one. "In the island that is in the midst of the loch is Eillid Chaisfhion —the white-footed hind, of the slenderest legs, and the swiftest step, and though she should be caught, there would spring a hoodie out of her, and though the hoodie should be caught, there would spring a trout out of her, but there is an egg in the mouth of the trout, and the soul of the beast is in the egg, and if the egg breaks, the beast is dead." As usual the egg is broken and the beast dies.

In an Irish story we read how a giant kept a beautiful damsel a prisoner in his castle on the top of a hill, which was white with the bones of the champions who had tried in vain to rescue the fair captive. At last the hero, after hewing and slashing at the giant all to no purpose, discovered that the only way to kill him was to rub a mole on the giant's right breast with a certain egg, which was in a duck, which was in a chest, which lay locked and bound at the bottom of the sea.

With the help of some obliging animals, the hero made himself master of the precious egg and slew the giant by merely striking it against the mole on his right breast. Similarly in a Breton story there figures a giant whom neither fire nor water nor steel can harm. He tells his seventh wife, whom he has just married after murdering all her predecessors, "I am immortal, and no one can hurt me unless he crushes on my breast an egg, which is in a pigeon, which is in the belly of a hare; this hare is in the belly of a wolf, and this wolf is in the belly of my brother, who dwells a thousand leagues from here. So I am quite easy on that score." A soldier contrived to obtain the egg and crush it on the breast of the giant, who immediately expired. In another Breton tale the life of a giant resides in an old box-tree which grows in his castle garden; and to kill him it is necessary to sever the tap-root of the tree at a single blow of an axe without injuring any of the lesser roots. This task the hero, as usual, successfully accomplishes, and at the same moment the giant drops dead.

The notion of an external soul has now been traced in folk-tales told by Aryan peoples from India to Ireland. We have still to show that the same idea occurs commonly in the popular stories of peoples who do not belong to the Aryan stock. In the ancient Egyptian tale of "The Two Brothers," which was written down in the reign of Rameses II., about 1300 B.C., we read how one of the brothers enchanted his heart and placed it in the flower of an acacia tree, and how, when the flower was cut at the instigation of his wife, he immediately fell down dead, but revived when his brother found the lost heart in the berry of the acacia and threw it into a cup of fresh water.

In the story of Seyf el-Mulook in the *Arabian Nights* the jinnee tells the captive daughter of the King of India, "When I was born, the astrologers declared that the destruction of my soul would be effected by the hand of one of the sons of the human kings. I therefore took my soul, and put it into the crop of a sparrow, and I imprisoned the sparrow in a little box, and put this into another small box, and this I put within seven other small boxes, and I put these within seven chests, and the chests I put into a coffer of marble within the verge of this circumambient ocean; for this part is remote from the countries of mankind, and none of mankind can gain access to it." But Seyf el-Mulook got possession of the sparrow and strangled it, and the jinnee fell upon the ground a heap of black ashes. In a Kabyle story an ogre declares that his fate is far away in an egg, which is in a pigeon, which is in a camel, which is in the sea. The hero procures the egg and crushes it between his hands, and the ogre dies. In a Magyar folk-tale, an old witch detains a young prince called Ambrose in the bowels of the earth. At last she confided to him that she kept a wild boar in a silken meadow, and if it were killed, they would find a hare inside, and inside the hare a pigeon, and inside the pigeon a small box, and inside the box one black and one shining beetle: the shining beetle held her life, and the black one held her power; if these two beetles died, then her life would come to an end also. When the old hag went

out, Ambrose killed the wild boar, and took out the hare; from the hare he took the pigeon, from the pigeon the box, and from the box the two beetles; he killed the black beetle, but kept the shining one alive. So the witch's power left her immediately, and when she came home, she had to take to her bed. Having learned from her how to escape from his prison to the upper air, Ambrose killed the shining beetle, and the old hag's spirit left her at once. In a Kalmuck tale we read how a certain khan challenged a wise man to show his skill by stealing a precious stone on which the khan's life depended. The sage contrived to purloin the talisman while the khan and his guards slept; but not content with this he gave a further proof of his dexterity by bonneting the slumbering potentate with a bladder. This was too much for the khan. Next morning he informed the sage that he could overlook everything else, but that the indignity of being bonneted with a bladder was more than he could bear; and he ordered his facetious friend to instant execution. Pained at this exhibition of royal ingratitude, the sage dashed to the ground the talisman which he still held in his hand; and at the same instant blood flowed from the nostrils of the khan, and he gave up the ghost.

In a Tartar poem two heroes named Ak Molot and Bulat engage in mortal combat. Ak Molot pierces his foe through and through with an arrow, grapples with him, and dashes him to the ground, but all in vain, Bulat could not die. At last when the combat has lasted three years, a friend of Ak Molot sees a golden casket hanging by a white thread from the sky, and bethinks him that perhaps this casket contains Bulat's soul. So he shot through the white thread with an arrow, and down fell the casket. He opened it, and in the casket sat ten white birds, and one of the birds was Bulat's soul. Bulat wept when he saw that his soul was found in the casket. But one after the other the birds were killed, and then Ak Molot easily slew his foe. In another Tartar poem, two brothers going to fight two other brothers take out their souls and hide them in the form of a white herb with six stalks in a deep pit. But one of their foes sees them doing so and digs up their souls, which he puts into a golden ram's horn, and then sticks the ram's horn in his quiver. The two warriors whose souls have thus been stolen know that they have no chance of victory, and accordingly make peace with their enemies. In another Tartar poem a terrible demon sets all the gods and heroes at defiance. At last a valiant youth fights the demon, binds him hand and foot, and slices him with his sword. But still the demon is not slain. So the youth asked him, "Tell me, where is your soul hidden? For if your soul had been hidden in your body, you must have been dead long ago." The demon replied, "On the saddle of my horse is a bag. In the bag is a serpent with twelve heads. In the serpent is my soul. When you have killed the serpent, you have killed me also." So the youth took the saddle-bag from the horse and killed the twelve-headed serpent, whereupon the demon expired. In another Tartar poem a hero called Kök Chan deposits with a maiden

a golden ring, in which is half his strength. Afterwards when Kök Chan is wrestling long with a hero and cannot kill him, a woman drops into his mouth the ring which contains half his strength. Thus inspired with fresh force he slays his enemy.

In a Mongolian story the hero Joro gets the better of his enemy the lama Tschoridong in the following way. The lama, who is an enchanter, sends out his soul in the form of a wasp to sting Joro's eyes. But Joro catches the wasp in his hand, and by alternately shutting and opening his hand he causes the lama alternately to lose and recover consciousness. In a Tartar poem two youths cut open the body of an old witch and tear out her bowels, but all to no purpose, she still lives. On being asked where her soul is, she answers that it is in the middle of her shoe-sole in the form of a seven-headed speckled snake. So one of the youths slices her shoe-sole with his sword, takes out the speckled snake, and cuts off its seven heads. Then the witch dies. Another Tartar poem describes how the hero Kartaga grappled with the Swan-woman. Long they wrestled. Moons waxed and waned and still they wrestled; years came and went, and still the struggle went on. But the piebald horse and the black horse knew that the Swan-woman's soul was not in her. Under the black earth flow nine seas; where the seas meet and form one, the sea comes to the surface of the earth. At the mouth of the nine seas rises a rock of copper; it rises to the surface of the ground, it rises up between heaven and earth, this rock of copper. At the foot of the copper rock is a black chest, in the black chest is a golden casket, and in the golden casket is the soul of the Swan-woman. Seven little birds are the soul of the Swan-woman; if the birds are killed the Swan-woman will die straightway. So the horses ran to the foot of the copper rock, opened the black chest, and brought back the golden casket. Then the piebald horse turned himself into a bald-headed man, opened the golden casket, and cut off the heads of the seven birds. So the Swan-woman died. In another Tartar poem the hero, pursuing his sister who has driven away his cattle, is warned to desist from the pursuit because his sister has carried away his soul in a golden sword and a golden arrow, and if he pursues her she will kill him by throwing the golden sword or shooting the golden arrow at him.

A Malay poem relates how once upon a time in the city of Indrapoora there was a certain merchant who was rich and prosperous, but he had no children. One day as he walked with his wife by the river they found a baby girl, fair as an angel. So they adopted the child and called her Bidasari. The merchant caused a golden fish to be made, and into this fish he transferred the soul of his adopted daughter. Then he put the golden fish in a golden box full of water, and hid it in a pond in the midst of his garden. In time the girl grew to be a lovely woman. Now the King of Indrapoora had a fair young queen, who lived in fear that the king might take to himself a second wife. So, hearing of the charms of Bidasari, the queen resolved to put her out of the way. She lured the girl to the palace

and tortured her cruelly; but Bidasari could not die, because her soul was not in her. At last she could stand the torture no longer and said to the queen, "If you wish me to die, you must bring the box which is in the pond in my father's garden." So the box was brought and opened, and there was the golden fish in the water. The girl said, "My soul is in that fish. In the morning you must take the fish out of the water, and in the evening you must put it back into the water. Do not let the fish lie about, but bind it round your neck. If you do this, I shall soon die." So the queen took the fish out of the box and fastened it round her neck; and no sooner had she done so than Bidasari fell into a swoon. But in the evening, when the fish was put back into the water, Bidasari came to herself again. Seeing that she thus had the girl in her power, the queen sent her home to her adopted parents. To save her from further persecution her parents resolved to remove their daughter from the city. So in a lonely and desolate spot they built a house and brought Bidasari thither. There she dwelt alone, undergoing vicissitudes that corresponded with the vicissitudes of the golden fish in which was her soul. All day long, while the fish was out of the water, she remained unconscious; but in the evening, when the fish was put into the water, she revived. One day the king was out hunting, and coming to the house where Bidasari lay unconscious, was smitten with her beauty. He tried to waken her, but in vain. Next day, towards evening, he repeated his visit, but still found her unconscious. However, when darkness fell, she came to herself and told the king the secret of her life. So the king returned to the palace, took the fish from the queen, and put it in water. Immediately Bidasari revived, and the king took her to wife.

Another story of an external soul comes from Nias, an island to the west of Sumatra. Once on a time a chief was captured by his enemies, who tried to put him to death but failed. Water would not drown him nor fire burn him nor steel pierce him. At last his wife revealed the secret. On his head he had a hair as hard as a copper wire; and with this wire his life was bound up. So the hair was plucked out, and with it his spirit fled.

A West African story from Southern Nigeria relates how a king kept his soul in a little brown bird, which perched on a tall tree beside the gate of the palace. The king's life was so bound up with that of the bird that whoever should kill the bird would simultaneously kill the king and succeed to the kingdom. The secret was betrayed by the queen to her lover, who shot the bird with an arrow and thereby slew the king and ascended the vacant throne. A tale told by the Ba-Ronga of South Africa sets forth how the lives of a whole family were contained in one cat. When a girl of the family, named Titishan, married a husband, she begged her parents to let her take the precious cat with her to her new home. But they refused, saying, "You know that our life is attached to it"; and they offered to give her an antelope or even an elephant instead of it. But nothing would

satisfy her but the cat. So at last she carried it off with her and shut it up in a place where nobody saw it; even her husband knew nothing about it. One day, when she went to work in the fields, the cat escaped from its place of concealment, entered the hut, put on the warlike trappings of the husband, and danced and sang. Some children, attracted by the noise, discovered the cat at its antics, and when they expressed their astonishment, the animal only capered the more and insulted them besides. So they went to the owner and said, "There is somebody dancing in your house, and he insulted us." "Hold your tongues," said he, "I'll soon put a stop to your lies." So he went and hid behind the door and peeped in, and there sure enough was the cat prancing about and singing. He fired at it, and the animal dropped down dead. At the same moment his wife fell to the ground in the field where she was at work; said she, "I have been killed at home." But she had strength enough left to ask her husband to go with her to her parents' village, taking with him the dead cat wrapt up in a mat. All her relatives assembled, and bitterly they reproached her for having insisted on taking the animal with her to her husband's village. As soon as the mat was unrolled and they saw the dead cat, they all fell down lifeless one after the other. So the Clan of the Cat was destroyed; and the bereaved husband closed the gate of the village with a branch, and returned home, and told his friends how in killing the cat he had killed the whole clan, because their lives depended on the life of the cat.

Ideas of the same sort meet us in stories told by the North American Indians. Thus the Navajoes tell of a certain mythical being called "the Maiden that becomes a Bear," who learned the art of turning herself into a bear from the prairie wolf. She was a great warrior and quite invulnerable; for when she went to war she took out her vital organs and hid them, so that no one could kill her; and when the battle was over she put the organs back in their places again. The Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia tell of an ogress, who could not be killed because her life was in a hemlock branch. A brave boy met her in the woods, smashed her head with a stone, scattered her brains, broke her bones, and threw them into the water. Then, thinking he had disposed of the ogress, he went into her house. There he saw a woman rooted to the floor, who warned him, saying, "Now do not stay long. I know that you have tried to kill the ogress. It is the fourth time that somebody has tried to kill her. She never dies; she has nearly come to life. There in that covered hemlock branch is her life. Go there, and as soon as you see her enter, shoot her life. Then she will be dead." Hardly had she finished speaking when sure enough in came the ogress, singing as she walked. But the boy shot at her life, and she fell dead to the floor.

CHAPTER LXVII

THE EXTERNAL SOUL IN FOLK-CUSTOM

§ 1. *The External Soul in Inanimate Things.*—Thus the idea that the soul may be deposited for a longer or shorter time in some place of security outside the body, or at all events in the hair, is found in the popular tales of many races. It remains to show that the idea is not a mere figment devised to adorn a tale, but is a real article of primitive faith, which has given rise to a corresponding set of customs.

We have seen that in the tales the hero, as a preparation for battle, sometimes removes his soul from his body, in order that his body may be invulnerable and immortal in the combat. With a like intention the savage removes his soul from his body on various occasions of real or imaginary peril. Thus among the people of Minahassa in Celebes, when a family moves into a new house, a priest collects the souls of the whole family in a bag, and afterwards restores them to their owners, because the moment of entering a new house is supposed to be fraught with supernatural danger. In Southern Celebes, when a woman is brought to bed, the messenger who fetches the doctor or the midwife always carries with him something made of iron, such as a chopping-knife, which he delivers to the doctor. The doctor must keep the thing in his house till the confinement is over, when he gives it back, receiving a fixed sum of money for doing so. The chopping-knife, or whatever it is, represents the woman's soul, which at this critical time is believed to be safer out of her body than in it. Hence the doctor must take great care of the object; for were it lost, the woman's soul would assuredly, they think, be lost with it.

Among the Dyaks of Pinoeh, a district of South-eastern Borneo, when a child is born, a medicine-man is sent for, who conjures the soul of the infant into half a coco-nut, which he thereupon covers with a cloth and places on a square platter or charger suspended by cords from the roof. This ceremony he repeats at every new moon for a year. The intention of the ceremony is not explained by the writer who describes it, but we may conjecture that it is to place the soul of the child in a safer place than its own frail little body. This conjecture is confirmed by the reason assigned for a similar custom observed elsewhere in the Indian Archipelago. In the Kei Islands, when there is a newly-born child in a house, an empty coco-nut, split and spliced together again, may sometimes be seen hanging beside a rough wooden image of an ancestor. The soul of the infant is believed to be temporarily deposited in the coco-nut in order that it may be safe from the attacks of evil spirits; but when the child grows bigger and stronger, the soul will take up its permanent abode in its own body. Similarly among the Esquimaux of Alaska, when a child is sick, the medicine-man will sometimes extract its soul from its body and place it for safe-keeping in an amulet, which for further security he deposits in his own

medicine-bag. It seems probable that many amulets have been similarly regarded as soul-boxes, that is, as safes in which the souls of the owners are kept for greater security. An old Mang'anje woman in the West Shire district of British Central Africa used to wear round her neck an ivory ornament, hollow, and about three inches long, which she called her life or soul. Naturally, she would not part with it; a planter tried to buy it of her, but in vain. When Mr. James Macdonald was one day sitting in the house of a Hlubi chief, awaiting the appearance of that great man, who was busy decorating his person, a native pointed to a pair of magnificent ox-horns, and said, "Ntame has his soul in these horns." The horns were those of an animal which had been sacrificed, and they were held sacred. A magician had fastened them to the roof to protect the house and its inmates from the thunder-bolt. "The idea," adds Mr. Macdonald, "is in no way foreign to South African thought. A man's soul there may dwell in the roof of his house, in a tree, by a spring of water, or on some mountain scaur." Among the natives of the Gazelle Peninsula in New Britain there is a secret society which goes by the name of Ingniet or Ingiet. On his entrance into it every man receives a stone in the shape either of a human being or of an animal, and henceforth his soul is believed to be knit up in a manner with the stone. If it breaks, it is an evil omen for him; they say that the thunder has struck the stone and that he who owns it will soon die. If nevertheless the man survives the breaking of his soul-stone, they say that it was not a proper soul-stone and he gets a new one instead. The emperor Romanus Lecapenus was once informed by an astronomer that the life of Simeon, prince of Bulgaria, was bound up with a certain column in Constantinople, so that if the capital of the column were removed, Simeon would immediately die. The emperor took the hint and removed the capital, and at the same hour, as the emperor learned by enquiry, Simeon died of heart disease in Bulgaria.

Again, we have seen that in folk-tales a man's soul or strength is sometimes represented as bound up with his hair, and that when his hair is cut off he dies or grows weak. So the natives of Amboyna used to think that their strength was in their hair and would desert them if it were shorn. A criminal under torture in a Dutch Court of that island persisted in denying his guilt till his hair was cut off, when he immediately confessed. One man, who was tried for murder, endured without flinching the utmost ingenuity of his torturers till he saw the surgeon standing with a pair of shears. On asking what this was for, and being told that it was to cut his hair, he begged they would not do it, and made a clean breast. In subsequent cases, when torture failed to wring a confession from a prisoner, the Dutch authorities made a practice of cutting off his hair.

Here in Europe it used to be thought that the maleficent powers of witches and wizards resided in their hair, and that nothing could make any impression on the miscreants so long as they kept their hair on. Hence in France it was customary to shave the whole bodies of persons

charged with sorcery before handing them over to the torturer. Millaeus witnessed the torture of some persons at Toulouse, from whom no confession could be wrung until they were stripped and completely shaven, when they readily acknowledged the truth of the charge. A woman also, who apparently led a pious life, was put to the torture on suspicion of witchcraft, and bore her agonies with incredible constancy, until complete depilation drove her to admit her guilt. The noted inquisitor Sprenger contented himself with shaving the head of the suspected witch or wizard; but his more thoroughgoing colleague Cumanus shaved the whole bodies of forty-seven women before committing them all to the flames. He had high authority for this rigorous scrutiny, since Satan himself, in a sermon preached from the pulpit of North Berwick church, comforted his many servants by assuring them that no harm could befall them "sa lang as their hair wes on, and sould newir latt ane teir fall fra thair ene." Similarly in Bastar, a province of India, "if a man is adjudged guilty of witchcraft, he is beaten by the crowd, his hair is shaved, the hair being supposed to constitute his power of mischief, his front teeth are knocked out, in order, it is said, to prevent him from muttering incantations. . . . Women suspected of sorcery have to undergo the same ordeal; if found guilty, the same punishment is awarded, and after being shaved, their hair is attached to a tree in some public place." So among the Bhils of India, when a woman was convicted of witchcraft and had been subjected to various forms of persuasion, such as hanging head downwards from a tree and having pepper put into her eyes, a lock of hair was cut from her head and buried in the ground, "that the last link between her and her former powers of mischief might be broken." In like manner among the Aztecs of Mexico, when wizards and witches "had done their evil deeds, and the time came to put an end to their detestable life, some one laid hold of them and cropped the hair on the crown of their heads, which took from them all their power of sorcery and enchantment, and then it was that by death they put an end to their odious existence."

§ 2. *The External Soul in Plants.*—Further it has been shown that in folk-tales the life of a person is sometimes so bound up with the life of a plant that the withering of the plant will immediately follow or be followed by the death of the person. Among the M'Bengas in Western Africa, about the Gaboon, when two children are born on the same day, the people plant two trees of the same kind and dance round them. The life of each of the children is believed to be bound up with the life of one of the trees; and if the tree dies or is thrown down, they are sure that the child will soon die. In the Cameroons, also, the life of a person is believed to be sympathetically bound up with that of a tree. The chief of Old Town in Calabar kept his soul in a sacred grove near a spring of water. When some Europeans, in frolic or ignorance, cut down part of the grove, the spirit was most indignant and threatened the perpetrators of the deed, according to the king, with all manner of evil.

Some of the Papuans unite the life of a new-born babe sympathetically with that of a tree by driving a pebble into the bark of the tree. This is supposed to give them complete mastery over the child's life; if the tree is cut down, the child will die. After a birth the Maoris used to bury the navel-string in a sacred place and plant a young sapling over it. As the tree grew, it was a *tohu oranga* or sign of life for the child; if it flourished, the child would prosper; if it withered and died, the parents augured the worst for the little one. In some parts of Fiji the navel-string of a male infant is planted together with a coco-nut or the slip of a breadfruit-tree, and the child's life is supposed to be intimately connected with that of the tree. Amongst the Dyaks of Landak and Tajan, districts of Dutch Borneo, it is customary to plant a fruit-tree for a baby, and henceforth in the popular belief the fate of the child is bound up with that of the tree. If the tree shoots up rapidly, it will go well with the child; but if the tree is dwarfed or shrivelled, nothing but misfortune can be expected for its human counterpart.

It is said that there are still families in Russia, Germany, England, France, and Italy who are accustomed to plant a tree at the birth of a child. The tree, it is hoped, will grow with the child, and it is tended with special care. The custom is still pretty general in the canton of Aargau in Switzerland; an apple-tree is planted for a boy and a pear-tree for a girl, and the people think that the child will flourish or dwindle with the tree. In Mecklenburg the afterbirth is thrown out at the foot of a young tree, and the child is then believed to grow with the tree. Near the Castle of Dalhousie, not far from Edinburgh, there grows an oak-tree, called the Edgewell Tree, which is popularly believed to be linked to the fate of the family by a mysterious tie; for they say that when one of the family dies, or is about to die, a branch falls from the Edgewell Tree. Thus, on seeing a great bough drop from the tree on a quiet, still day in July 1874, an old forester exclaimed, "The laird's deid noo!" and soon after news came that Fox Maule, eleventh Earl of Dalhousie, was dead.

In England children are sometimes passed through a cleft ash-tree as a cure for rupture or rickets, and thenceforward a sympathetic connexion is supposed to exist between them and the tree. An ash-tree which had been used for this purpose grew at the edge of Shirley Heath, on the road from Hockly House to Birmingham. "Thomas Chillingworth, son of the owner of an adjoining farm, now about thirty-four, was, when an infant of a year old, passed through a similar tree, now perfectly sound, which he preserves with so much care that he will not suffer a single branch to be touched, for it is believed the life of the patient depends on the life of the tree, and the moment that is cut down, be the patient ever so distant, the rupture returns, and a mortification ensues, and terminates in death, as was the case in a man driving a waggon on the very road in question." "It is not uncommon, however," adds the writer, "for persons to survive for a time the felling of the tree." The ordinary mode of effecting the cure

is to split a young ash-sapling longitudinally for a few feet and pass the child, naked, either three times or three times three through the fissure at sunrise. In the West of England it is said that the passage should be "against the sun." As soon as the ceremony has been performed, the tree is bound tightly up and the fissure plastered over with mud or clay. The belief is that just as the cleft in the tree closes up, so the rupture in the child's body will be healed; but that if the rift in the tree remains open, the rupture in the child will remain too, and if the tree were to die, the death of the child would surely follow.

A similar cure for various diseases, but especially for rupture and rickets, has been commonly practised in other parts of Europe, as Germany, France, Denmark, and Sweden; but in these countries the tree employed for the purpose is usually not an ash but an oak; sometimes a willow-tree is allowed or even prescribed instead. In Mecklenburg, as in England, the sympathetic relation thus established between the tree and the child is believed to be so close that if the tree is cut down the child will die.

§ 3. *The External Soul in Animals.*—But in practice, as in folk-tales, it is not merely with inanimate objects and plants that a person is occasionally believed to be united by a bond of physical sympathy. The same bond, it is supposed, may exist between a man and an animal, so that the welfare of the one depends on the welfare of the other, and when the animal dies the man dies also. The analogy between the custom and the tales is all the closer because in both of them the power of thus removing the soul from the body and stowing it away in an animal is often a special privilege of wizards and witches. Thus the Yakuts of Siberia believe that every shaman or wizard keeps his soul, or one of his souls, incarnate in an animal which is carefully concealed from all the world. "Nobody can find my external soul," said one famous wizard, "it lies hidden far away in the stony mountains of Edzhigansk." Only once a year, when the last snows melt and the earth turns black, do these external souls of wizards appear in the shape of animals among the dwellings of men. They wander everywhere, yet none but wizards can see them. The strong ones sweep roaring and noisily along, the weak steal about quietly and furtively. Often they fight, and then the wizard whose external soul is beaten, falls ill or dies. The weakest and most cowardly wizards are they whose souls are incarnate in the shape of dogs, for the dog gives his human double no peace, but gnaws his heart and tears his body. The most powerful wizards are they whose external souls have the shape of stallions, elks, black bears, eagles, or boars. Again, the Samoyeds of the Turukhinsk region hold that every shaman has a familiar spirit in the shape of a boar, which he leads about by a magic belt. On the death of the boar the shaman himself dies; and stories are told of battles between wizards, who send their spirits to fight before they encounter each other in person. The Malays believe that "the soul of a person may pass into another person or into an animal, or rather

that such a mysterious relation can arise between the two that the fate of the one is wholly dependent on that of the other."

Among the Melanesians of Mota, one of the New Hebrides islands, the conception of an external soul is carried out in the practice of daily life. In the Mota language the word *tamaniu* signifies "something animate or inanimate which a man has come to believe to have an existence intimately connected with his own. . . . It was not every one in Mota who had his *tamaniu;* only some men fancied that they had this relation to a lizard, a snake, or it might be a stone; sometimes the thing was sought for and found by drinking the infusion of certain leaves and heaping together the dregs; then whatever living thing was first seen in or upon the heap was the *tamaniu.* It was watched but not fed or worshipped; the natives believed that it came at call, and that the life of the man was bound up with the life of his *tamaniu,* if a living thing, or with its safety; should it die, or if not living get broken or be lost, the man would die. Hence in case of sickness they would send to see if the *tamaniu* was safe and well."

The theory of an external soul deposited in an animal appears to be very prevalent in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, the Cameroons, and the Gaboon. Among the Fans of the Gaboon every wizard is believed at initiation to unite his life with that of some particular wild animal by a rite of blood-brotherhood; he draws blood from the ear of the animal and from his own arm, and inoculates the animal with his own blood, and himself with the blood of the beast. Henceforth such an intimate union is established between the two that the death of the one entails the death of the other. The alliance is thought to bring to the wizard or sorcerer a great accession of power, which he can turn to his advantage in various ways. In the first place, like the warlock in the fairy tales who has deposited his life outside of himself in some safe place, the Fan wizard now deems himself invulnerable. Moreover, the animal with which he has exchanged blood has become his familiar, and will obey any orders he may choose to give it; so he makes use of it to injure and kill his enemies. For that reason the creature with whom he establishes the relation of blood-brotherhood is never a tame or domestic animal, but always a ferocious and dangerous wild beast, such as a leopard, a black serpent, a crocodile, a hippopotamus, a wild boar, or a vulture. Of all these creatures the leopard is by far the commonest familiar of Fan wizards, and next to it comes the black serpent; the vulture is the rarest. Witches as well as wizards have their familiars; but the animals with which the lives of women are thus bound up generally differ from those to which men commit their external souls. A witch never has a panther for her familiar, but often a venomous species of serpent, sometimes a horned viper, sometimes a black serpent, sometimes a green one that lives in banana-trees; or it may be a vulture, an owl, or other bird of night. In every case the beast or bird with which the witch or wizard has contracted this mystic alliance is an individual, never a species; and when the individual animal

dies the alliance is naturally at an end, since the death of the animal is supposed to entail the death of the man.

Similar beliefs are held by the natives of the Cross River valley within the provinces of the Cameroons. Groups of people, generally the inhabitants of a village, have chosen various animals, with which they believe themselves to stand on a footing of intimate friendship or relationship. Amongst such animals are hippopotamuses, elephants, leopards, crocodiles, gorillas, fish, and serpents, all of them creatures which are either very strong or can easily hide themselves in the water or a thicket. This power of concealing themselves is said to be an indispensable condition of the choice of animal familiars, since the animal friend or helper is expected to injure his owner's enemy by stealth; for example, if he is a hippopotamus, he will bob up suddenly out of the water and capsize the enemy's canoe. Between the animals and their human friends or kinsfolk such a sympathetic relation is supposed to exist that the moment the animal dies the man dies also, and similarly the instant the man perishes so does the beast. From this it follows that the animal kinsfolk may never be shot at or molested for fear of injuring or killing the persons whose lives are knit up with the lives of the brutes. This does not, however, prevent the people of a village, who have elephants for their animal friends, from hunting elephants. For they do not respect the whole species but merely certain individuals of it, which stand in an intimate relation to certain individual men and women; and they imagine that they can always distinguish these brother elephants from the common herd of elephants which are mere elephants and nothing more. The recognition indeed is said to be mutual. When a hunter, who has an elephant for his friend, meets a human elephant, as we may call it, the noble animal lifts up a paw and holds it before his face, as much as to say, "Don't shoot." Were the hunter so inhuman as to fire on and wound such an elephant, the person whose life was bound up with the elephant would fall ill.

The Balong of the Cameroons think that every man has several souls, of which one is in his body and another in an animal, such as an elephant, a wild pig, a leopard, and so forth. When a man comes home, feeling ill, and says, "I shall soon die," and dies accordingly, the people aver that one of his souls has been killed in a wild pig or a leopard and that the death of the external soul has caused the death of the soul in his body. A similar belief in the external souls of living people is entertained by the Ibos, an important tribe of the Niger delta. They think that a man's spirit can quit his body for a time during life and take up its abode in an animal. A man who wishes to acquire this power procures a certain drug from a wise man and mixes it with his food. After that his soul goes out and enters into an animal. If it should happen that the animal is killed while the man's soul is lodged in it, the man dies; and if the animal be wounded, the man's body will presently be covered with boils. This belief instigates to many deeds of darkness; for a sly rogue will sometimes surreptitiously

administer the magical drug to his enemy in his food, and having thus smuggled the other's soul into an animal will destroy the creature, and with it the man whose soul is lodged in it.

The negroes of Calabar, at the mouth of the Niger, believe that every person has four souls, one of which always lives outside of his or her body in the form of a wild beast in the forest. This external soul, or bush soul, as Miss Kingsley calls it, may be almost any animal, for example, a leopard, a fish, or a tortoise; but it is never a domestic animal and never a plant. Unless he is gifted with second sight, a man cannot see his own bush soul, but a diviner will often tell him what sort of creature his bush soul is, and after that the man will be careful not to kill any animal of that species, and will strongly object to any one else doing so. A man and his sons have usually the same sort of animals for their bush souls, and so with a mother and her daughters. But sometimes all the children of a family take after the bush soul of their father; for example, if his external soul is a leopard, all his sons and daughters will have leopards for their external souls. And on the other hand, sometimes they all take after their mother; for instance, if her external soul is a tortoise, all the external souls of her sons and daughters will be tortoises too. So intimately bound up is the life of the man with that of the animal which he regards as his external or bush soul, that the death or injury of the animal necessarily entails the death or injury of the man. And, conversely, when the man dies, his bush soul can no longer find a place of rest, but goes mad and rushes into the fire or charges people and is knocked on the head, and that is an end of it.

Near Eket in North Calabar there is a sacred lake, the fish of which are carefully preserved because the people believe that their own souls are lodged in the fish, and that with every fish killed a human life would be simultaneously extinguished. In the Calabar River not very many years ago there used to be a huge old crocodile, popularly supposed to contain the external soul of a chief who resided in the flesh at Duke Town. Sporting vice-consuls used from time to time to hunt the animal, and once an officer contrived to hit it. Forthwith the chief was laid up with a wound in his leg. He gave out that a dog had bitten him, but no doubt the wise shook their heads and refused to be put off with so flimsy a pretext. Again, among several tribes on the banks of the Niger between Lokoja and the delta there prevails "a belief in the possibility of a man possessing an *alter ego* in the form of some animal such as a crocodile or a hippopotamus. It is believed that such a person's life is bound up with that of the animal to such an extent that, whatever affects the one produces a corresponding impression upon the other, and that if one dies the other must speedily do so too. It happened not very long ago that an Englishman shot a hippopotamus close to a native village; the friends of a woman who died the same night in the village demanded and eventually obtained five pounds as compensation for the murder of the woman."

Amongst the Zapotecs of Central America, when a woman was about to be confined, her relations assembled in the hut, and began to draw on the floor figures of different animals, rubbing each one out as soon as it was completed. This went on till the moment of birth, and the figure that then remained sketched upon the ground was called the child's *tona* or second self. "When the child grew old enough, he procured the animal that represented him and took care of it, as it was believed that health and existence were bound up with that of the animal's, in fact that the death of both would occur simultaneously," or rather that when the animal died the man would die too. Among the Indians of Guatemala and Honduras the *nagual* or *naual* is "that animate or inanimate object, generally an animal, which stands in a parallel relation to a particular man, so that the weal and woe of the man depend on the fate of the *nagual*." According to an old writer, many Indians of Guatemala "are deluded by the devil to believe that their life dependeth upon the life of such and such a beast (which they take unto them as their familiar spirit), and think that when that beast dieth they must die; when he is chased, their hearts pant; when he is faint, they are faint; nay, it happeneth that by the devil's delusion they appear in the shape of that beast (which commonly by their choice is a buck, or doe, a lion, or tigre, or dog, or eagle) and in that shape have been shot at and wounded." The Indians were persuaded that the death of their *nagual* would entail their own. Legend affirms that in the first battles with the Spaniards on the plateau of Quetzaltenango the *naguals* of the Indian chiefs fought in the form of serpents. The *nagual* of the highest chief was especially conspicuous, because it had the form of a great bird, resplendent in green plumage. The Spanish general Pedro de Alvarado killed the bird with his lance, and at the same moment the Indian chief fell dead to the ground.

In many tribes of South-Eastern Australia each sex used to regard a particular species of animals in the same way that a Central American Indian regarded his *nagual*, but with this difference, that whereas the Indian apparently knew the individual animal with which his life was bound up, the Australians only knew that each of their lives was bound up with some one animal of the species, but they could not say with which. The result naturally was that every man spared and protected all the animals of the species with which the lives of the men were bound up; and every woman spared and protected all the animals of the species with which the lives of the women were bound up; because no one knew but that the death of any animal of the respective species might entail his or her own; just as the killing of the green bird was immediately followed by the death of the Indian chief, and the killing of the parrot by the death of Punchkin in the fairy tale. Thus, for example, the Wotjobaluk tribe of South-Eastern Australia "held that 'the life of Ngŭnŭngŭnŭt (the Bat) is the life of a man, and the life of Yártatgŭrk (the Nightjar) is the life of a woman,' and that when either of these creatures is killed the life of

some man or of some woman is shortened. In such a case every man or every woman in the camp feared that he or she might be the victim, and from this cause great fights arose in this tribe. I learn that in these fights, men on one side and women on the other, it was not at all certain which would be victorious, for at times the women gave the men a severe drubbing with their yamsticks, while often women were injured or killed by spears." The Wotjobaluk said that the bat was the man's "brother" and that the nightjar was his "wife." The particular species of animals with which the lives of the sexes were believed to be respectively bound up varied somewhat from tribe to tribe. Thus whereas among the Wotjobaluk the bat was the animal of the men, at Gunbower Creek on the Lower Murray the bat seems to have been the animal of the women, for the natives would not kill it for the reason that "if it was killed, one of their lubras [women] would be sure to die in consequence." But whatever the particular sorts of creature with which the lives of men and women were believed to be bound up, the belief itself and the fights to which it gave rise are known to have prevailed over a large part of South-Eastern Australia, and probably they extended much farther. The belief was a very serious one, and so consequently were the fights which sprang from it. Thus among some tribes of Victoria "the common bat belongs to the men, who protect it against injury, even to the half-killing of their wives for its sake. The fern owl, or large goatsucker, belongs to the women, and, although a bird of evil omen, creating terror at night by its cry, it is jealously protected by them. If a man kills one, they are as much enraged as if it was one of their children, and will strike him with their long poles."

The jealous protection thus afforded by Australian men and women to bats and owls respectively (for bats and owls seem to be the creatures usually allotted to the two sexes) is not based upon purely selfish considerations. For each man believes that not only his own life but the lives of his father, brothers, sons, and so on are bound up with the lives of particular bats, and that therefore in protecting the bat species he is protecting the lives of all his male relations as well as his own. Similarly, each woman believes that the lives of her mother, sisters, daughters, and so forth, equally with her own, are bound up with the lives of particular owls, and that in guarding the owl species she is guarding the lives of all her female relations besides her own. Now, when men's lives are thus supposed to be contained in certain animals, it is obvious that the animals can hardly be distinguished from the men, or the men from the animals. If my brother John's life is in a bat, then, on the one hand, the bat is my brother as well as John; and, on the other hand, John is in a sense a bat, since his life is in a bat. Similarly, if my sister Mary's life is in an owl, then the owl is my sister and Mary is an owl. This is a natural enough conclusion, and the Australians have not failed to draw it. When the bat is the man's animal, it is called his brother; and when the owl is the woman's animal, it is called her sister. And conversely a man

addresses a woman as an owl, and she addresses him as a bat. So with the other animals allotted to the sexes respectively in other tribes. For example, among the Kurnai all emu-wrens were "brothers" of the men, and all the men were emu-wrens; all superb warblers were "sisters" of the women, and all the women were superb warblers.

But when a savage names himself after an animal, calls it his brother, and refuses to kill it, the animal is said to be his totem. Accordingly in the tribes of South-Eastern Australia which we have been considering the bat and the owl, the emu-wren and the superb warbler, may properly be described as totems of the sexes. But the assignation of a totem to a sex is comparatively rare, and has hitherto been discovered nowhere but in Australia. Far more commonly the totem is appropriated not to a sex, but to a clan, and is hereditary either in the male or female line. The relation of an individual to the clan totem does not differ in kind from his relation to the sex totem; he will not kill it, he speaks of it as his brother, and he calls himself by its name. Now if the relations are similar, the explanation which holds good of the one ought equally to hold good of the other. Therefore, the reason why a clan revere a particular species of animals or plants (for the clan totem may be a plant) and call themselves after it, would seem to be a belief that the life of each individual of the clan is bound up with some one animal or plant of the species, and that his or her death would be the consequence of killing that particular animal, or destroying that particular plant. This explanation of totemism squares very well with Sir George Grey's definition of a totem or *kobong* in Western Australia. He says: "A certain mysterious connexion exists between a family and its *kobong*, so that a member of the family will never kill an animal of the species to which his *kobong* belongs, should he find it asleep; indeed he always kills it reluctantly, and never without affording it a chance to escape. This arises from the family belief that some one individual of the species is their nearest friend, to kill whom would be a great crime, and to be carefully avoided. Similarly, a native who has a vegetable for his *kobong* may not gather it under certain circumstances, and at a particular period of the year." Here it will be observed that though each man spares all the animals or plants of the species, they are not all equally precious to him; far from it, out of the whole species there is only one which is specially dear to him; but as he does not know which the dear one is, he is obliged to spare them all from fear of injuring the one. Again, this explanation of the clan totem harmonises with the supposed effect of killing one of the totem species. "One day one of the blacks killed a crow. Three or four days afterwards a Boortwa (crow) [*i. e.* a man of the Crow clan] named Larry died. He had been ailing for some days, but the killing of his *wingong* [totem] hastened his death." Here the killing of the crow caused the death of a man of the Crow clan, exactly as, in the case of the sex-totems, the killing of a bat causes the death of a Bat-man or the killing of an owl causes the death of an Owl-woman. Similarly, the killing of his

nagual causes the death of a Central American Indian, the killing of his bush soul causes the death of a Calabar negro, the killing of his *tamaniu* causes the death of a Banks Islander, and the killing of the animal in which his life is stowed away causes the death of the giant or warlock in the fairy tale.

Thus it appears that the story of "The giant who had no heart in his body" may perhaps furnish the key to the relation which is supposed to subsist between a man and his totem. The totem, on this theory, is simply the receptacle in which a man keeps his life, as Punchkin kept his life in a parrot, and Bidasari kept her soul in a golden fish. It is no valid objection to this view that when a savage has both a sex totem and a clan totem his life must be bound up with two different animals, the death of either of which would entail his own. If a man has more vital places than one in his body, why, the savage may think, should he not have more vital places than one outside it? Why, since he can put his life outside himself, should he not transfer one portion of it to one animal and another to another? The divisibility of life, or, to put it otherwise, the plurality of souls, is an idea suggested by many familiar facts, and has commended itself to philosophers like Plato, as well as to savages. It is only when the notion of a soul, from being a quasi-scientific hypothesis, becomes a theological dogma that its unity and indivisibility are insisted upon as essential. The savage, unshackled by dogma, is free to explain the facts of life by the assumption of as many souls as he thinks necessary. Hence, for example, the Caribs supposed that there was one soul in the head, another in the heart, and other souls at all the places where an artery is felt pulsating. Some of the Hidatsa Indians explain the phenomena of gradual death, when the extremities appear dead first, by supposing that man has four souls, and that they quit the body, not simultaneously, but one after the other, dissolution being only complete when all four have departed. Some of the Dyaks of Borneo and the Malays of the Peninsula believe that every man has seven souls. The Alfoors of Poso in Celebes are of opinion that he has three. The natives of Laos suppose that the body is the seat of thirty spirits, which reside in the hands, the feet, the mouth, the eyes, and so on. Hence, from the primitive point of view, it is perfectly possible that a savage should have one soul in his sex totem and another in his clan totem. However, as I have observed, sex totems have been found nowhere but in Australia; so that as a rule the savage who practises totemism need not have more than one soul out of his body at a time.

If this explanation of the totem as a receptacle in which a man keeps his soul or one of his souls is correct, we should expect to find some totemic people of whom it is expressly said that every man amongst them is believed to keep at least one soul permanently out of his body, and that the destruction of this external soul is supposed to entail the death of its owner. Such a people are the Bataks of Sumatra. The Bataks are divided into exogamous clans (*margas*) with descent in the male line; and each clan is forbidden to eat the

flesh of a particular animal. One clan may not eat the tiger, another the ape, another the crocodile, another the dog, another the cat, another the dove, another the white buffalo, and another the locust. The reason given by members of a clan for abstaining from the flesh of the particular animal is either that they are descended from animals of that species, and that their souls after death may transmigrate into the animals, or that they or their forefathers have been under certain obligations to the creatures. Sometimes, but not always, the clan bears the name of the animal. Thus the Bataks have totemism in full. But, further, each Batak believes that he has seven or, on a more moderate computation, three souls. One of these souls is always outside the body, but nevertheless whenever it dies, however far away it may be at the time, that same moment the man dies also. The writer who mentions this belief says nothing about the Batak totems; but on the analogy of the Australian, Central American, and African evidence we may conjecture that the external soul, whose death entails the death of the man, is housed in the totemic animal or plant.

Against this view it can hardly be thought to militate that the Batak does not in set terms affirm his external soul to be in his totem, but alleges other grounds for respecting the sacred animal or plant of his clan. For if a savage seriously believes that his life is bound up with an external object, it is in the last degree unlikely that he will let any stranger into the secret. In all that touches his inmost life and beliefs the savage is exceedingly suspicious and reserved; Europeans have resided among savages for years without discovering some of their capital articles of faith, and in the end the discovery has often been the result of accident. Above all, the savage lives in an intense and perpetual dread of assassination by sorcery; the most trifling relics of his person—the clippings of his hair and nails, his spittle, the remnants of his food, his very name—all these may, he fancies, be turned by the sorcerer to his destruction, and he is therefore anxiously careful to conceal or destroy them. But if in matters such as these, which are but the outposts and outworks of his life, he is so shy and secretive, how close must be the concealment, how impenetrable the reserve in which he enshrouds the inner keep and citadel of his being! When the princess in the fairy tale asks the giant where he keeps his soul, he often gives false or evasive answers, and it is only after much coaxing and wheedling that the secret is at last wrung from him. In his jealous reticence the giant resembles the timid and furtive savage; but whereas the exigencies of the story demand that the giant should at last reveal his secret, no such obligation is laid on the savage; and no inducement that can be offered is likely to tempt him to imperil his soul by revealing its hiding-place to a stranger. It is therefore no matter for surprise that the central mystery of the savage's life should so long have remained a secret, and that we should be left to piece it together from scattered hints and fragments and from the recollections of it which linger in fairy tales.

§ 4. *The Ritual of Death and Resurrection.*—This view of totemism

throws light on a class of religious rites of which no adequate explanation, so far as I am aware, has yet been offered. Amongst many savage tribes, especially such as are known to practice totemism, it is customary for lads at puberty to undergo certain initiatory rites, of which one of the commonest is a pretence of killing the lad and bringing him to life again. Such rites become intelligible if we suppose that their substance consists in extracting the youth's soul in order to transfer it to his totem. For the extraction of his soul would naturally be supposed to kill the youth or at least to throw him into a death-like trance, which the savage hardly distinguishes from death. His recovery would then be attributed either to the gradual recovery of his system from the violent shock which it had received, or, more probably, to the infusion into him of fresh life drawn from the totem. Thus the essence of these initiatory rites, so far as they consist in a simulation of death and resurrection, would be an exchange of life or souls between the man and his totem. The primitive belief in the possibility of such an exchange of souls comes clearly out in a story of a Basque hunter who affirmed that he had been killed by a bear, but that the bear had, after killing him, breathed its own soul into him, so that the bear's body was now dead, but he himself was a bear, being animated by the bear's soul. This revival of the dead hunter as a bear is exactly analogous to what, on the theory here suggested, is supposed to take place in the ceremony of killing a lad at puberty and bringing him to life again. The lad dies as a man and comes to life again as an animal; the animal's soul is now in him, and his human soul is in the animal. With good right, therefore, does he call himself a Bear or a Wolf, etc., according to his totem; and with good right does he treat the bears or the wolves, etc., as his brethren, since in these animals are lodged the souls of himself and his kindred.

Examples of this supposed death and resurrection at initiation are as follows. In the Wonghi or Wonghibon tribe of New South Wales the youths on approaching manhood are initiated at a secret ceremony, which none but initiated men may witness. Part of the proceedings consists in knocking out a tooth and giving a new name to the novice, indicative of the change from youth to manhood. While the teeth are being knocked out an instrument known as a bull-roarer, which consists of a flat piece of wood with serrated edges tied to the end of a string, is swung round so as to produce a loud humming noise. The uninitiated are not allowed to see this instrument. Women are forbidden to witness the ceremonies under pain of death. It is given out that the youths are each met in turn by a mythical being, called Thuremlin (more commonly known as Daramulun) who takes the youth to a distance, kills him, and in some instances cuts him up, after which he restores him to life and knocks out a tooth. Their belief in the power of Thuremlin is said to be undoubted.

The Ualaroi of the Upper Darling River said that at initiation the boy met a ghost, who killed him and brought him to life again as a

young man. Among the natives on the Lower Lachlan and Murray Rivers it was Thrumalun (Daramulun) who was thought to slay and resuscitate the novices. In the Unmatjera tribe of Central Australia women and children believe that a spirit called Twanyirika kills the youth and afterwards brings him to life again during the period of initiation. The rites of initiation in this tribe, as in the other Central tribes, comprise the operations of circumcision and subincision; and as soon as the second of these has been performed on him, the young man receives from his father a sacred stick (*churinga*), with which, he is told, his spirit was associated in the remotest past. While he is out in the bush recovering from his wounds, he must swing the bull-roarer, or a being who lives up in the sky will swoop down and carry him off. In the Binbinga tribe, on the western coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria, the women and children believe that the noise of the bull-roarer at initiation is made by a spirit named Katajalina, who lives in an ant-hill and comes out and eats up the boy, afterwards restoring him to life. Similarly among their neighbours the Anula the women imagine that the droning sound of the bull-roarer is produced by a spirit called Gnabaia, who swallows the lads at initiation and afterwards disgorges them in the form of initiated men.

Among the tribes settled on the southern coast of New South Wales, of which the Coast Murring tribe may be regarded as typical, the drama of resurrection from the dead was exhibited in a graphic form to the novices at initiation. The ceremony has been described for us by an eye-witness. A man, disguised with stringy bark fibre, lay down in a grave and was lightly covered up with sticks and earth. In his hand he held a small bush, which appeared to be growing in the soil, and other bushes were stuck in the ground to heighten the effect. Then the novices were brought and placed beside the grave. Next, a procession of men, disguised in stringy bark fibre, drew near. They represented a party of medicine-men, guided by two reverend seniors, who had come on pilgrimage to the grave of a brother medicine-man, who lay buried there. When the little procession, chanting an invocation to Daramulun, had defiled from among the rocks and trees into the open, it drew up on the side of the grave opposite to the novices, the two old men taking up a position in the rear of the dancers. For some time the dance and song went on till the tree that seemed to grow from the grave began to quiver. "Look there!" cried the men to the novices, pointing to the trembling leaves. As they looked, the tree quivered more and more, then was violently agitated and fell to the ground, while amid the excited dancing of the dancers and the chanting of the choir the supposed dead man spurned from him the superincumbent mass of sticks and leaves, and springing to his feet danced his magic dance in the grave itself, and exhibited in his mouth the magic substances which he was supposed to have received from Daramulun in person.

Some tribes of Northern New Guinea—the Yabim, Bukaua, Kai, and Tami—like many Australian tribes, require every male member of the tribe to be circumcised before he ranks as a full-grown man; and the tribal initiation, of which circumcision is the central feature, is conceived by them, as by some Australian tribes, as a process of being swallowed and disgorged by a mythical monster, whose voice is heard in the humming sound of the bull-roarer. Indeed the New Guinea tribes not only impress this belief on the minds of women and children, but enact it in a dramatic form at the actual rites of initiation, at which no woman or uninitiated person may be present. For this purpose a hut about a hundred feet long is erected either in the village or in a lonely part of the forest. It is modelled in the shape of the mythical monster; at the end which represents his head it is high, and it tapers away at the other end. A betel-palm, grubbed up with the roots, stands for the backbone of the great being and its clustering fibres for his hair; and to complete the resemblance the butt end of the building is adorned by a native artist with a pair of goggle eyes and a gaping mouth. When after a tearful parting from their mothers and women folk, who believe or pretend to believe in the monster that swallows their dear ones, the awe-struck novices are brought face to face with this imposing structure, the huge creature emits a sullen growl, which is in fact no other than the humming note of bull-roarers swung by men concealed in the monster's belly. The actual process of deglutition is variously enacted. Among the Tami it is represented by causing the candidates to defile past a row of men who hold bull-roarers over their heads; among the Kai it is more graphically set forth by making them pass under a scaffold on which stands a man, who makes a gesture of swallowing and takes in fact a gulp of water as each trembling novice passes beneath him. But the present of a pig, opportunely offered for the redemption of the youth, induces the monster to relent and disgorge his victim; the man who represents the monster accepts the gift vicariously, a gurgling sound is heard, and the water which had just been swallowed descends in a jet on the novice. This signifies that the young man has been released from the monster's belly. However, he has now to undergo the more painful and dangerous operation of circumcision. It follows immediately, and the cut made by the knife of the operator is explained to be a bite or scratch which the monster inflicted on the novice in spewing him out of his capacious maw. While the operation is proceeding, a prodigious noise is made by the swinging of bull-roarers to represent the roar of the dreadful being who is in the act of swallowing the young man.

When, as sometimes happens, a lad dies from the effect of the operation, he is buried secretly in the forest, and his sorrowing mother is told that the monster has a pig's stomach as well as a human stomach, and that unfortunately her son slipped into the wrong stomach, from which it was impossible to extricate him. After they have been circumcised the lads must remain for some months in seclusion, shun-

ning all contact with women and even the sight of them. They live in the long hut which represents the monster's belly. When at last the lads, now ranking as initiated men, are brought back with great pomp and ceremony to the village, they are received with sobs and tears of joy by the women, as if the grave had given up its dead. At first the young men keep their eyes rigidly closed or even sealed with a plaster of chalk, and they appear not to understand the words of command which are given them by an elder. Gradually, however, they come to themselves as if awakening from a stupor, and next day they bathe and wash off the crust of white chalk with which their bodies had been coated.

It is highly significant that all these tribes of New Guinea apply the same word to the bull-roarer and to the monster, who is supposed to swallow the novices at circumcision, and whose fearful roar is represented by the hum of the harmless wooden instruments. Further, it deserves to be noted that in three languages out of the four the same word which is applied to the bull-roarer and to the monster means also a ghost or spirit of the dead, while in the fourth language (the Kai) it signifies "grandfather." From this it seems to follow that the being who swallows and disgorges the novices at initiation is believed to be a powerful ghost or ancestral spirit, and that the bull-roarer, which bears his name, is his material representative. That would explain the jealous secrecy with which the sacred implement is kept from the sight of women. While they are not in use, the bull-roarers are stowed away in the men's club-houses, which no woman may enter; indeed no woman or uninitiated person may set eyes on a bull-roarer under pain of death. Similarly among the Tugeri or Kaya-Kaya, a large Papuan tribe on the south coast of Dutch New Guinea, the name of the bull-roarer, which they call *sosom*, is given to a mythical giant, who is supposed to appear every year with the south-east monsoon. When he comes, a festival is held in his honour and bull-roarers are swung. Boys are presented to the giant, and he kills them, but considerately brings them to life again.

In certain districts of Viti Levu, the largest of the Fijian Islands, the drama of death and resurrection used to be acted with much solemnity before the eyes of young men at initiation. In a sacred enclosure they were shown a row of dead or seemingly dead men lying on the ground, their bodies cut open and covered with blood, their entrails protruding. But at a yell from the high priest the counterfeit dead men started to their feet and ran down to the river to cleanse themselves from the blood and guts of pigs with which they were beslobbered. Soon they marched back to the sacred enclosure as if come to life, clean, fresh, and garlanded, swaying their bodies in time to the music of a solemn hymn, and took their places in front of the novices. Such was the drama of death and resurrection.

The people of Rook, an island between New Guinea and New Britain, hold festivals at which one or two disguised men, their heads

covered with wooden masks, go dancing through the village, followed by all the other men. They demand that the circumcised boys who have not yet been swallowed by Marsaba (the devil) shall be given up to them. The boys, trembling and shrieking, are delivered to them, and must creep between the legs of the disguised men. Then the procession moves through the village again, and announces that Marsaba has eaten up the boys, and will not disgorge them till he receives a present of pigs, taro, and so forth. So all the villagers, according to their means, contribute provisions, which are then consumed in the name of Marsaba.

In the west of Ceram boys at puberty are admitted to the Kakian association. Modern writers have commonly regarded this association as primarily a political league instituted to resist foreign domination. In reality its objects are purely religious and social, though it is possible that the priests may have occasionally used their powerful influence for political ends. The society is in fact merely one of those widely-diffused primitive institutions, of which a chief object is the initiation of young men. In recent years the true nature of the association has been duly recognised by the distinguished Dutch ethnologist, J. G. F. Riedel. The Kakian house is an oblong wooden shed, situated under the darkest trees in the depth of the forest, and is built to admit so little light that it is impossible to see what goes on in it. Every village has such a house. Thither the boys who are to be initiated are conducted blindfold, followed by their parents and relations. Each boy is led by the hand of two men, who act as his sponsors or guardians, looking after him during the period of initiation. When all are assembled before the shed, the high priest calls aloud upon the devils. Immediately a hideous uproar is heard to proceed from the shed. It is made by men with bamboo trumpets, who have been secretly introduced into the building by a back door, but the women and children think it is made by the devils, and are much terrified. Then the priests enter the shed, followed by the boys, one at a time. As soon as each boy has disappeared within the precincts, a dull chopping sound is heard, a fearful cry rings out, and a sword or spear, dripping with blood, is thrust through the roof of the shed. This is a token that the boy's head has been cut off, and that the devil has carried him away to the other world, there to regenerate and transform him. So at sight of the bloody sword the mothers weep and wail, crying that the devil has murdered their children. In some places, it would seem, the boys are pushed through an opening made in the shape of a crocodile's jaws or a cassowary's beak, and it is then said that the devil has swallowed them. The boys remain in the shed for five or nine days. Sitting in the dark, they hear the blast of the bamboo trumpets, and from time to time the sound of musket shots and the clash of swords. Every day they bathe, and their faces and bodies are smeared with a yellow dye, to give them the appearance of having been swallowed by the devil. During his stay in the Kakian house each boy has one or two crosses tattooed with thorns on his

breast or arm. When they are not sleeping, the lads must sit in a crouching posture without moving a muscle. As they sit in a row cross-legged, with their hands stretched out, the chief takes his trumpet, and placing the mouth of it on the hands of each lad, speaks through it in strange tones, imitating the voice of the spirits. He warns the lads, under pain of death, to observe the rules of the Kakian society, and never to reveal what has passed in the Kakian house. The novices are also told by the priests to behave well to their blood relations, and are taught the traditions and secrets of the tribe.

Meantime the mothers and sisters of the lads have gone home to weep and mourn. But in a day or two the men who acted as guardians or sponsors to the novices return to the village with the glad tidings that the devil, at the intercession of the priests, has restored the lads to life. The men who bring this news come in a fainting state and daubed with mud, like messengers freshly arrived from the nether world. Before leaving the Kakian house, each lad receives from the priest a stick adorned at both ends with a cock's or cassowary's feathers. The sticks are supposed to have been given to the lads by the devil at the time when he restored them to life, and they serve as a token that the youths have been in the spirit land. When they return to their homes they totter in their walk, and enter the house backward, as if they had forgotten how to walk properly; or they enter the house by the back door. If a plate of food is given to them, they hold it upside down. They remain dumb, indicating their wants by signs only. All this is to show that they are still under the influence of the devil or the spirits. Their sponsors have to teach them all the common acts of life, as if they were new-born children. Further, upon leaving the Kakian house the boys are strictly forbidden to eat of certain fruits until the next celebration of the rites has taken place. And for twenty or thirty days their hair may not be combed by their mothers or sisters. At the end of that time the high priest takes them to a lonely place in the forest, and cuts off a lock of hair from the crown of each of their heads. After these initiatory rites the lads are deemed men, and may marry; it would be a scandal if they married before.

In the region of the Lower Congo a simulation of death and resurrection is, or rather used to be, practised by the members of a guild or secret society called *ndembo*. "In the practice of Ndembo the initiating doctors get some one to fall down in a pretended fit, and in that state he is carried away to an enclosed place outside the town. This is called 'dying Ndembo.' Others follow suit, generally boys and girls, but often young men and women. . . . They are supposed to have died. But the parents and friends supply food, and after a period varying, according to custom, from three months to three years, it is arranged that the doctor shall bring them to life again. . . . When the doctor's fee has been paid, and money (goods) saved for a feast, the *Ndembo* people are brought to life. At first they pretend to know no one and nothing; they do not even know how to

masticate food, and friends have to perform that office for them. They want everything nice that any one uninitiated may have, and beat them if it is not granted, or even strangle and kill people. They do not get into trouble for this, because it is thought that they do not know better. Sometimes they carry on the pretence of talking gibberish, and behaving as if they had returned from the spirit-world. After this they are known by another name, peculiar to those who have 'died Ndembo.' . . . We hear of the custom far along on the upper river, as well as in the cataract region."

Among some of the Indian tribes of North America there exist certain religious associations which are only open to candidates who have gone through a pretence of being killed and brought to life again. In 1766 or 1767 Captain Jonathan Carver witnessed the admission of a candidate to an association called "the friendly society of the Spirit" (*Wakon-Kitchewah*) among the Naudowessies, a Siouan or Dacotan tribe in the region of the great lakes. The candidate knelt before the chief, who told him that "he himself was now agitated by the same spirit which he should in a few moments communicate to him; that it would strike him dead, but that he would instantly be restored again to life; to this he added, that the communication, however terrifying, was a necessary introduction to the advantages enjoyed by the community into which he was on the point of being admitted. As he spoke this, he appeared to be greatly agitated; till at last his emotions became so violent, that his countenance was distorted, and his whole frame convulsed. At this juncture he threw something that appeared both in shape and colour like a small bean, at the young man, which seemed to enter his mouth, and he instantly fell as motionless as if he had been shot." For a time the man lay like dead, but under a shower of blows he showed signs of consciousness, and finally, discharging from his mouth the bean, or whatever it was that the chief had thrown at him, he came to life. In other tribes, for example, the Ojebways, Winnebagoes, and Dacotas or Sioux, the instrument by which the candidate is apparently slain is the medicine-bag. The bag is made of the skin of an animal (such as the otter, wild cat, serpent, bear, raccoon, wolf, owl, weasel), of which it roughly preserves the shape. Each member of the society has one of these bags, in which he keeps the odds and ends that make up his "medicine" or charms. "They believe that from the miscellaneous contents in the belly of the skin bag or animal there issues a spirit or breath, which has the power, not only to knock down and kill a man, but also to set him up and restore him to life." The mode of killing a man with one of these medicine-bags is to thrust it at him; he falls like dead, but a second thrust of the bag restores him to life.

A ceremony witnessed by the castaway John R. Jewitt during his captivity among the Indians of Nootka Sound doubtless belongs to this class of customs. The Indian king or chief "discharged a pistol close to his son's ear, who immediately fell down as if killed, upon which all the women of the house set up a most lamentable cry,

tearing handfuls of hair from their heads, and exclaiming that the prince was dead; at the same time a great number of the inhabitants rushed into the house armed with their daggers, muskets, etc., enquiring the cause of their outcry. These were immediately followed by two others dressed in wolf-skins, with masks over their faces representing the head of that animal. The latter came in on their hands and feet in the manner of a beast, and taking up the prince, carried him off upon their backs, retiring in the same manner they entered." In another place Jewitt mentions that the young prince—a lad of about eleven years of age—wore a mask in imitation of a wolf's head. Now, as the Indians of this part of America are divided into totem clans, of which the Wolf clan is one of the principal, and as the members of each clan are in the habit of wearing some portion of the totem animal about their person, it is probable that the prince belonged to the Wolf clan, and that the ceremony described by Jewitt represented the killing of the lad in order that he might be born anew as a wolf, much in the same way that the Basque hunter supposed himself to have been killed and to have come to life again as a bear.

This conjectural explanation of the ceremony has, since it was first put forward, been to some extent confirmed by the researches of Dr. Franz Boas among these Indians; though it would seem that the community to which the chief's son thus obtained admission was not so much a totem clan as a secret society called Tlokoala, whose members imitated wolves. Every new member of the society must be initiated by the wolves. At night a pack of wolves, personated by Indians dressed in wolf-skins and wearing wolf-masks, make their appearance, seize the novice, and carry him into the woods. When the wolves are heard outside the village, coming to fetch away the novice, all the members of the society blacken their faces and sing, "Among all the tribes is great excitement, because I am Tlokoala." Next day the wolves bring back the novice dead, and the members of the society have to revive him. The wolves are supposed to have put a magic stone into his body, which must be removed before he can come to life. Till this is done the pretended corpse is left lying outside the house. Two wizards go and remove the stone, which appears to be quartz, and then the novice is resuscitated. Among the Niska Indians of British Columbia, who are divided into four principal clans with the raven, the wolf, the eagle, and the bear for their respective totems, the novice at initiation is always brought back by an artificial totem animal. Thus when a man was about to be initiated into a secret society called Olala, his friends drew their knives and pretended to kill him. In reality they let him slip away, while they cut off the head of a dummy which had been adroitly substituted for him. Then they laid the decapitated dummy down and covered it over, and the women began to mourn and wail. His relations gave a funeral banquet and solemnly burnt the effigy. In short, they held a regular funeral. For a whole year the novice remained absent and was seen by none but members of the secret society. But at the end of that time he

came back alive, carried by an artificial animal which represented his totem.

In these ceremonies the essence of the rite appears to be the killing of the novice in his character of a man and his restoration to life in the form of the animal which is thenceforward to be, if not his guardian spirit, at least linked to him in a peculiarly intimate relation. It is to be remembered that the Indians of Guatemala, whose life was bound up with an animal, were supposed to have the power of appearing in the shape of the particular creature with which they were thus sympathetically united. Hence it seems not unreasonable to conjecture that in like manner the Indians of British Columbia may imagine that their life depends on the life of some one of that species of creature to which they assimilate themselves by their costume. At least if that is not an article of belief with the Columbian Indians of the present day, it may very well have been so with their ancestors in the past, and thus may have helped to mould the rites and ceremonies both of the totem clans and of the secret societies. For though these two sorts of communities differ in respect of the mode in which membership of them is obtained—a man being born into his totem clan but admitted into a secret society later in life—we can hardly doubt that they are near akin and have their root in the same mode of thought. That thought, if I am right, is the possibility of establishing a sympathetic relation with an animal, a spirit, or other mighty being, with whom a man deposits for safe-keeping his soul or some part of it, and from whom he receives in return a gift of magical powers.

Thus, on the theory here suggested, wherever totemism is found, and wherever a pretence is made of killing and bringing to life again the novice at initiation, there may exist or have existed not only a belief in the possibility of permanently depositing the soul in some external object—animal, plant, or what not—but an actual intention of so doing. If the question is put, why do men desire to deposit their life outside their bodies? the answer can only be that, like the giant in the fairy tale, they think it safer to do so than to carry it about with them, just as people deposit their money with a banker rather than carry it on their persons. We have seen that at critical periods the life or soul is sometimes temporarily stowed away in a safe place till the danger is past. But institutions like totemism are not resorted to merely on special occasions of danger; they are systems into which every one, or at least every male, is obliged to be initiated at a certain period of life. Now the period of life at which initiation takes place is regularly puberty; and this fact suggests that the special danger which totemism and systems like it are intended to obviate is supposed not to arise till sexual maturity has been attained, in fact, that the danger apprehended is believed to attend the relation of the sexes to each other. It would be easy to prove by a long array of facts that the sexual relation is associated in the primitive mind with many serious perils; but the exact nature of the danger appre-

hended is still obscure. We may hope that a more exact acquaintance with savage modes of thought will in time disclose this central mystery of primitive society, and will thereby furnish the clue, not only to totemism, but to the origin of the marriage system.

CHAPTER LXVIII

THE GOLDEN BOUGH

THUS the view that Balder's life was in the mistletoe is entirely in harmony with primitive modes of thought. It may indeed sound like a contradiction that, if his life was in the mistletoe, he should nevertheless have been killed by a blow from the plant. But when a person's life is conceived as embodied in a particular object, with the existence of which his own existence is inseparably bound up, and the destruction of which involves his own, the object in question may be regarded and spoken of indifferently as his life or his death, as happens in the fairy tales. Hence if a man's death is in an object, it is perfectly natural that he should be killed by a blow from it. In the fairy tales Koshchei the Deathless is killed by a blow from the egg or the stone in which his life or death is secreted; the ogres burst when a certain grain of sand—doubtless containing their life or death—is carried over their heads; the magician dies when the stone in which his life or death is contained is put under his pillow; and the Tartar hero is warned that he may be killed by the golden arrow or golden sword in which his soul has been stowed away.

The idea that the life of the oak was in the mistletoe was probably suggested, as I have said, by the observation that in winter the mistletoe growing on the oak remains green while the oak itself is leafless. But the position of the plant—growing not from the ground but from the trunk or branches of the tree—might confirm this idea. Primitive man might think that, like himself, the oak-spirit had sought to deposit his life in some safe place, and for this purpose had pitched on the mistletoe, which, being in a sense neither on earth nor in heaven, might be supposed to be fairly out of harm's way. In a former chapter we saw that primitive man seeks to preserve the life of his human divinities by keeping them poised between earth and heaven, as the place where they are least likely to be assailed by the dangers that encompass the life of man on earth. We can therefore understand why it has been a rule both of ancient and of modern folk-medicine that the mistletoe should not be allowed to touch the ground; were it to touch the ground, its healing virtue would be gone. This may be a survival of the old superstition that the plant in which the life of the sacred tree was concentrated should not be exposed to the risk incurred by contact with the earth. In an Indian legend, which offers a parallel to the Balder myth, Indra

swore to the demon Namuci that he would slay him neither by day nor by night, neither with staff nor with bow, neither with the palm of the hand nor with the fist, neither with the wet nor with the dry. But he killed him in the morning twilight by sprinkling over him the foam of the sea. The foam of the sea is just such an object as a savage might choose to put his life in, because it occupies that sort of intermediate or nondescript position between earth and sky or sea and sky in which primitive man sees safety. It is therefore not surprising that the foam of the river should be the totem of a clan in India.

Again, the view that the mistletoe owes its mystic character partly to its not growing on the ground is confirmed by a parallel superstition about the mountain-ash or rowan-tree. In Jutland a rowan that is found growing out of the top of another tree is esteemed "exceedingly effective against witchcraft: since it does not grow on the ground witches have no power over it; if it is to have its full effect it must be cut on Ascension Day." Hence it is placed over doors to prevent the ingress of witches. In Sweden and Norway, also, magical properties are ascribed to a "flying-rowan" (*flögrönn*), that is to a rowan which is found growing not in the ordinary fashion on the ground but on another tree, or on a roof, or in a cleft of the rock, where it has sprouted from seed scattered by birds. They say that a man who is out in the dark should have a bit of "flying-rowan" with him to chew; else he runs a risk of being bewitched and of being unable to stir from the spot. Just as in Scandinavia the parasitic rowan is deemed a countercharm to sorcery, so in Germany the parasitic mistletoe is still commonly considered a protection against witchcraft, and in Sweden, as we saw, the mistletoe which is gathered on Midsummer Eve is attached to the ceiling of the house, the horse's stall or the cow's crib, in the belief that this renders the Troll powerless to injure man or beast.

The view that the mistletoe was not merely the instrument of Balder's death, but that it contained his life, is countenanced by the analogy of a Scottish superstition. Tradition ran that the fate of the Hays of Errol, an estate in Perthshire, near the Firth of Tay, was bound up with the mistletoe that grew on a certain great oak. A member of the Hay family has recorded the old belief as follows: "Among the low country families the badges are now almost generally forgotten; but it appears by an ancient MS., and the tradition of a few old people in Perthshire, that the badge of the Hays was the mistletoe. There was formerly in the neighbourhood of Errol, and not far from the Falcon stone, a vast oak of an unknown age, and upon which grew a profusion of the plant: many charms and legends were considered to be connected with the tree, and the duration of the family of Hay was said to be united with its existence. It was believed that a sprig of the mistletoe cut by a Hay on Allhallowmas eve, with a new dirk, and after surrounding the tree three times sunwise, and pronouncing a certain spell, was a sure charm against

all glamour or witchery, and an infallible guard in the day of battle. A spray gathered in the same manner was placed in the cradle of infants, and thought to defend them from being changed for elf-bairns by the fairies. Finally, it was affirmed, that when the root of the oak had perished, 'the grass should grow in the hearth of Errol, and a raven should sit in the falcon's nest.' The two most unlucky deeds which could be done by one of the name of Hay was, to kill a white falcon, and to cut down a limb from the oak of Errol. When the old tree was destroyed I could never learn. The estate has been sold out of the family of Hay, and of course it is said that the fatal oak was cut down a short time before." The old superstition is recorded in verses which are traditionally ascribed to Thomas the Rhymer:

While the mistletoe bats on Errol's aik,
And that aik stands fast,
The Hays shall flourish, and their good grey hawk
Shall nocht flinch before the blast.

But when the root of the aik decays,
And the mistletoe dwines on its withered breast,
The grass shall grow on Errol's hearthstane,
And the corbie roup in the falcon's nest.

It is not a new opinion that the Golden Bough was the mistletoe. True, Virgil does not identify but only compares it with mistletoe. But this may be only a poetical device to cast a mystic glamour over the humble plant. Or, more probably, his description was based on a popular superstition that at certain times the mistletoe blazed out into a supernatural golden glory. The poet tells how two doves, guiding Aeneas to the gloomy vale in whose depth grew the Golden Bough, alighted upon a tree, "whence shone a flickering gleam of gold. As in the woods in winter cold the mistletoe—a plant not native to its tree—is green with fresh leaves and twines its yellow berries about the boles; such seemed upon the shady holm-oak the leafy gold, so rustled in the gentle breeze the golden leaf." Here Virgil definitely describes the Golden Bough as growing on a holm-oak, and compares it with the mistletoe. The inference is almost inevitable that the Golden Bough was nothing but the mistletoe seen through the haze of poetry or of popular superstition.

Now grounds have been shown for believing that the priest of the Arician grove—the King of the Wood—personified the tree on which grew the Golden Bough. Hence if that tree was the oak, the King of the Wood must have been a personification of the oak-spirit. It is, therefore, easy to understand why, before he could be slain, it was necessary to break the Golden Bough. As an oak-spirit, his life or death was in the mistletoe on the oak, and so long as the mistletoe remained intact, he, like Balder, could not die. To slay him, therefore, it was necessary to break the mistletoe, and probably, as in the case of Balder, to throw it at him. And to complete the

parallel, it is only necessary to suppose that the King of the Wood was formerly burned, dead or alive, at the midsummer fire festival which, as we have seen, was annually celebrated in the Arician grove. The perpetual fire which burned in the grove, like the perpetual fire which burned in the temple of Vesta at Rome and under the oak at Romove, was probably fed with the sacred oak-wood; and thus it would be in a great fire of oak that the King of the Wood formerly met his end. At a later time, as I have suggested, his annual tenure of office was lengthened or shortened, as the case might be, by the rule which allowed him to live so long as he could prove his divine right by the strong hand. But he only escaped the fire to fall by the sword.

Thus it seems that at a remote age in the heart of Italy, beside the sweet Lake of Nemi, the same fiery tragedy was annually enacted which Italian merchants and soldiers were afterwards to witness among their rude kindred, the Celts of Gaul, and which, if the Roman eagles had ever swooped on Norway, might have been found repeated with little difference among the barbarous Aryans of the North. The rite was probably an essential feature in the ancient Aryan worship of the oak.

It only remains to ask, Why was the mistletoe called the Golden Bough? The whitish-yellow of the mistletoe berries is hardly enough to account for the name, for Virgil says that the bough was altogether golden, stems as well as leaves. Perhaps the name may be derived from the rich golden yellow which a bough of mistletoe assumes when it has been cut and kept for some months; the bright tint is not confined to the leaves, but spreads to the stalks as well, so that the whole branch appears to be indeed a Golden Bough. Breton peasants hang up great bunches of mistletoe in front of their cottages, and in the month of June these bunches are conspicuous for the bright golden tinge of their foliage. In some parts of Brittany, especially about Morbihan, branches of mistletoe are hung over the doors of stables and byres to protect the horses and cattle, probably against witchcraft.

The yellow colour of the withered bough may partly explain why the mistletoe has been sometimes supposed to possess the property of disclosing treasures in the earth; for on the principles of homoeopathic magic there is a natural affinity between a yellow bough and yellow gold. This suggestion is confirmed by the analogy of the marvellous properties popularly ascribed to the mythical fern-seed, which is popularly supposed to bloom like gold or fire on Midsummer Eve. Thus in Bohemia it is said that "on St. John's Day fern-seed blooms with golden blossoms that gleam like fire." Now it is a property of this mythical fern-seed that whoever has it, or will ascend a mountain holding it in his hand on Midsummer Eve, will discover a vein of gold or will see the treasures of the earth shining with a bluish flame. In Russia they say that if you succeed in catching the wondrous bloom of the fern at midnight on Midsummer Eve, you have only to throw it

up into the air, and it will fall like a star on the very spot where a treasure lies hidden. In Brittany treasure-seekers gather fern-seed at midnight on Midsummer Eve, and keep it till Palm Sunday of the following year; then they strew the seed on the ground where they think a treasure is concealed. Tyrolese peasants imagine that hidden treasures can be seen glowing like flame on Midsummer Eve, and that fern-seed, gathered at this mystic season, with the usual precautions, will help to bring the buried gold to the surface. In the Swiss canton of Freiburg people used to watch beside a fern on St. John's night in the hope of winning a treasure, which the devil himself sometimes brought to them. In Bohemia they say that he who procures the golden bloom of the fern at this season has thereby the key to all hidden treasures; and that if maidens will spread a cloth under the fast-fading bloom, red gold will drop into it. And in the Tyrol and Bohemia if you place fern-seed among money, the money will never decrease, however much of it you spend. Sometimes the fern-seed is supposed to bloom on Christmas night, and whoever catches it will become very rich. In Styria they say that by gathering fern-seed on Christmas night you can force the devil to bring you a bag of money.

Thus, on the principle of like by like, fern-seed is supposed to discover gold because it is itself golden; and for a similar reason it enriches its possessor with an unfailing supply of gold. But while the fern-seed is described as golden, it is equally described as glowing and fiery. Hence, when we consider that two great days for gathering the fabulous seed are Midsummer Eve and Christmas—that is, the two solstices (for Christmas is nothing but an old heathen celebration of the winter solstice)—we are led to regard the fiery aspect of the fern-seed as primary, and its golden aspect as secondary and derivative. Fern-seed, in fact, would seem to be an emanation of the sun's fire at the two turning-points of its course, the summer and winter solstices. This view is confirmed by a German story in which a hunter is said to have procured fern-seed by shooting at the sun on Midsummer Day at noon; three drops of blood fell down, which he caught in a white cloth, and these blood-drops were the fern-seed. Here the blood is clearly the blood of the sun, from which the fern-seed is thus directly derived. Thus it may be taken as probable that fern-seed is golden, because it is believed to be an emanation of the sun's golden fire.

Now, like fern-seed, the mistletoe is gathered either at Midsummer or at Christmas—that is, either at the summer or at the winter solstice—and, like fern-seed, it is supposed to possess the power of revealing treasures in the earth. On Midsummer Eve people in Sweden make divining-rods of mistletoe, or of four different kinds of wood one of which must be mistletoe. The treasure-seeker places the rod on the ground after sundown, and when it rests directly over treasure, the rod begins to move as if it were alive. Now, if the mistletoe discovers gold, it must be in its character of the Golden Bough; and if it is gathered at the solstices, must not the Golden Bough, like the golden fern-seed, be an emanation of the sun's fire? The question cannot be answered with

a simple affirmative. We have seen that the old Aryans perhaps kindled the solstitial and other ceremonial fires in part as sun-charms, that is, with the intention of supplying the sun with fresh fire; and as these fires were usually made by the friction or combustion of oak-wood, it may have appeared to the ancient Aryan that the sun was periodically recruited from the fire which resided in the sacred oak. In other words, the oak may have seemed to him the original storehouse or reservoir of the fire which was from time to time drawn out to feed the sun. But if the life of the oak was conceived to be in the mistletoe, the mistletoe must on that view have contained the seed or germ of the fire which was elicited by friction from the wood of the oak. Thus, instead of saying that the mistletoe was an emanation of the sun's fire, it might be more correct to say that the sun's fire was regarded as an emanation of the mistletoe. No wonder, then, that the mistletoe shone with a golden splendour, and was called the Golden Bough. Probably, however, like fern-seed, it was thought to assume its golden aspect only at those stated times, especially midsummer, when fire was drawn from the oak to light up the sun. At Pulverbatch, in Shropshire, it was believed within living memory that the oak-tree blooms on Midsummer Eve and the blossom withers before daylight. A maiden who wishes to know her lot in marriage should spread a white cloth under the tree at night, and in the morning she will find a little dust, which is all that remains of the flower. She should place the pinch of dust under her pillow, and then her future husband will appear to her in her dreams. This fleeting bloom of the oak, if I am right, was probably the mistletoe in its character of the Golden Bough. The conjecture is confirmed by the observation that in Wales a real sprig of mistletoe gathered on Midsummer Eve is similarly placed under the pillow to induce prophetic dreams; and further the mode of catching the imaginary bloom of the oak in a white cloth is exactly that which was employed by the Druids to catch the real mistletoe when it dropped from the bough of the oak, severed by the golden sickle. As Shropshire borders on Wales, the belief that the oak blooms on Midsummer Eve may be Welsh in its immediate origin, though probably the belief is a fragment of the primitive Aryan creed. In some parts of Italy, as we saw, peasants still go out on Midsummer morning to search the oak-trees for the "oil of St. John," which, like the mistletoe, heals all wounds, and is, perhaps, the mistletoe itself in its glorified aspect. Thus it is easy to understand how a title like the Golden Bough, so little descriptive of its usual appearance on the tree, should have been applied to the seemingly insignificant parasite. Further, we can perhaps see why in antiquity mistletoe was believed to possess the remarkable property of extinguishing fire, and why in Sweden it is still kept in houses as a safeguard against conflagration. Its fiery nature marks it out, on homoeopathic principles, as the best possible cure or preventive of injury by fire.

These considerations may partially explain why Virgil makes Aeneas carry a glorified bough of mistletoe with him on his descent

into the gloomy subterranean world. The poet describes how at the very gates of hell there stretched a vast and gloomy wood, and how the hero, following the flight of two doves that lured him on, wandered into the depths of the immemorial forest till he saw afar off through the shadows of the trees the flickering light of the Golden Bough illuminating the matted boughs overhead. If the mistletoe, as a yellow withered bough in the sad autumn woods, was conceived to contain the seed of fire, what better companion could a forlorn wanderer in the nether shades take with him than a bough that would be a lamp to his feet as well as a rod and staff to his hands? Armed with it he might boldly confront the dreadful spectres that would cross his path on his adventurous journey. Hence when Aeneas, emerging from the forest, comes to the banks of Styx, winding slow with sluggish stream through the infernal marsh, and the surly ferryman refuses him passage in his boat, he has but to draw the Golden Bough from his bosom and hold it up, and straightway the blusterer quails at the sight and meekly receives the hero into his crazy bark, which sinks deep in the water under the unusual weight of the living man. Even in recent times, as we have seen, mistletoe has been deemed a protection against witches and trolls, and the ancients may well have credited it with the same magical virtue. And if the parasite can, as some of our peasants believe, open all locks, why should it not have served as an "open Sesame" in the hands of Aeneas to unlock the gates of death?

Now, too, we can conjecture why Virbius at Nemi came to be confounded with the sun. If Virbius was, as I have tried to show, a tree-spirit, he must have been the spirit of the oak on which grew the Golden Bough; for tradition represented him as the first of the Kings of the Wood. As an oak-spirit he must have been supposed periodically to rekindle the sun's fire, and might therefore easily be confounded with the sun itself. Similarly we can explain why Balder, an oak-spirit, was described as "so fair of face and so shining that a light went forth from him," and why he should have been so often taken to be the sun. And in general we may say that in primitive society, when the only known way of making fire is by the friction of wood, the savage must necessarily conceive of fire as a property stored away, like sap or juice, in trees, from which he has laboriously to extract it. The Senal Indians of California "profess to believe that the whole world was once a globe of fire, whence that element passed up into the trees, and now comes out whenever two pieces of wood are rubbed together." Similarly the Maidu Indians of California hold that "the earth was primarily a globe of molten matter, and from that the principle of fire ascended through the roots into the trunk and branches of trees, whence the Indians can extract it by means of their drill." In Namoluk, one of the Caroline Islands, they say that the art of making fire was taught men by the gods. Olofaet, the cunning master of flames, gave fire to the bird *mwi* and bade him carry it to earth in his bill. So the bird flew from tree to

tree and stored away the slumbering force of the fire in the wood, from which men can elicit it by friction. In the ancient Vedic hymns of India the fire-god Agni "is spoken of as born in wood, as the embryo of plants, or as distributed in plants. He is also said to have entered into all plants or to strive after them. When he is called the embryo of trees or of trees as well as plants, there may be a side-glance at the fire produced in forests by the friction of the boughs of trees."

A tree which has been struck by lightning is naturally regarded by the savage as charged with a double or triple portion of fire; for has he not seen the mighty flash enter into the trunk with his own eyes? Hence perhaps we may explain some of the many superstitious beliefs concerning trees that have been struck by lightning. When the Thompson Indians of British Columbia wished to set fire to the houses of their enemies, they shot at them arrows which were either made from a tree that had been struck by lightning or had splinters of such wood attached to them. Wendish peasants of Saxony refuse to burn in their stoves the wood of trees that have been struck by lightning; they say that with such fuel the house would be burnt down. In like manner the Thonga of South Africa will not use such wood as fuel nor warm themselves at a fire which has been kindled with it. On the contrary, when lightning sets fire to a tree, the Winamwanga of Northern Rhodesia put out all the fires in the village and plaster the fireplaces afresh, while the head men convey the lightning-kindled fire to the chief, who prays over it. The chief then sends out the new fire to all his villages, and the villagers reward his messengers for the boon. This shows that they look upon fire kindled by lightning with reverence, and the reverence is intelligible, for they speak of thunder and lightning as God himself coming down to earth. Similarly the Maidu Indians of California believe that a Great Man created the world and all its inhabitants, and that lightning is nothing but the Great Man himself descending swiftly out of heaven and rending the trees with his flaming arms.

It is a plausible theory that the reverence which the ancient peoples of Europe paid to the oak, and the connexion which they traced between the tree and their sky-god, were derived from the much greater frequency with which the oak appears to be struck by lightning than any other tree of our European forests. This peculiarity of the tree has seemingly been established by a series of observations instituted within recent years by scientific enquirers who have no mythological theory to maintain. However we may explain it, whether by the easier passage of electricity through oak-wood than through any other timber, or in some other way, the fact itself may well have attracted the notice of our rude forefathers, who dwelt in the vast forests which then covered a large part of Europe; and they might naturally account for it in their simple religious way by supposing that the great sky-god, whom they worshipped and whose awful voice they heard in the roll of thunder, loved the oak above all the trees of the wood and often descended into it from the murky

cloud in a flash of lightning, leaving a token of his presence or of his passage in the riven and blackened trunk and the blasted foliage. Such trees would thenceforth be encircled by a nimbus of glory as the visible seats of the thundering sky-god. Certain it is that, like some savages, both Greeks and Romans identified their great god of the sky and of the oak with the lightning flash which struck the ground; and they regularly enclosed such a stricken spot and treated it thereafter as sacred. It is not rash to suppose that the ancestors of the Celts and Germans in the forests of Central Europe paid a like respect for like reasons to a blasted oak.

This explanation of the Aryan reverence for the oak and of the association of the tree with the great god of the thunder and the sky, was suggested or implied long ago by Jacob Grimm, and has been in recent years powerfully reinforced by Mr. W. Warde Fowler. It appears to be simpler and more probable than the explanation which I formerly adopted, namely, that the oak was worshipped primarily for the many benefits which our rude forefathers derived from the tree, particularly for the fire which they drew by friction from its wood; and that the connexion of the oak with the sky was an after-thought based on the belief that the flash of lightning was nothing but the spark which the sky-god up aloft elicited by rubbing two pieces of oak-wood against each other, just as his savage worshipper kindled fire in the forest on earth. On that theory the god of the thunder and the sky was derived from the original god of the oak; on the present theory, which I now prefer, the god of the sky and the thunder was the great original deity of our Aryan ancestors, and his association with the oak was merely an inference based on the frequency with which the oak was seen to be struck by lightning. If the Aryans, as some think, roamed the wide steppes of Russia or Central Asia with their flocks and herds before they plunged into the gloom of the European forests, they may have worshipped the god of the blue or cloudy firmament and the flashing thunderbolt long before they thought of associating him with the blasted oaks in their new home.

Perhaps the new theory has the further advantage of throwing light on the special sanctity ascribed to mistletoe which grows on an oak. The mere rarity of such a growth on an oak hardly suffices to explain the extent and the persistence of the superstition. A hint of its real origin is possibly furnished by the statement of Pliny that the Druids worshipped the plant because they believed it to have fallen from heaven and to be a token that the tree on which it grew was chosen by the god himself. Can they have thought that the mistletoe dropped on the oak in a flash of lightning? The conjecture is confirmed by the name thunder-besom which is applied to mistletoe in the Swiss canton of Aargau, for the epithet clearly implies a close connexion between the parasite and the thunder; indeed "thunder-besom" is a popular name in Germany for any bushy nest-like excrescence growing on a branch, because such a parasitic growth is actually believed by the ignorant to be a product of lightning.

If there is any truth in this conjecture, the real reason why the Druids worshipped a mistletoe-bearing oak above all other trees of the forest was a belief that every such oak had not only been struck by lightning but bore among its branches a visible emanation of the celestial fire; so that in cutting the mistletoe with mystic rites they were securing for themselves all the magical properties of a thunderbolt. If that was so, we must apparently conclude that the mistletoe was deemed an emanation of the lightning rather than, as I have thus far argued, of the midsummer sun. Perhaps, indeed, we might combine the two seemingly divergent views by supposing that in the old Aryan creed the mistletoe descended from the sun on Midsummer Day in a flash of lightning. But such a combination is artificial and unsupported, so far as I know, by any positive evidence. Whether on mythical principles the two interpretations can really be reconciled with each other or not, I will not presume to say; but even should they prove to be discrepant, the inconsistency need not have prevented our rude forefathers from embracing both of them at the same time with an equal fervour of conviction; for like the great majority of mankind the savage is above being hidebound by the trammels of a pedantic logic. In attempting to track his devious thought through the jungle of crass ignorance and blind fear, we must always remember that we are treading enchanted ground, and must beware of taking for solid realities the cloudy shapes that cross our path or hover and gibber at us through the gloom. We can never completely replace ourselves at the standpoint of primitive man, see things with his eyes, and feel our hearts beat with the emotions that stirred his. All our theories concerning him and his ways must therefore fall far short of certainty; the utmost we can aspire to in such matters is a reasonable degree of probability.

To conclude these enquiries we may say that if Balder was indeed, as I have conjectured, a personification of a mistletoe-bearing oak, his death by a blow of the mistletoe might on the new theory be explained as a death by a stroke of lightning. So long as the mistletoe, in which the flame of the lightning smouldered, was suffered to remain among the boughs, so long no harm could befall the good and kindly god of the oak, who kept his life stowed away for safety between earth and heaven in the mysterious parasite; but when once that seat of his life, or of his death, was torn from the branch and hurled at the trunk, the tree fell—the god died—smitten by a thunderbolt.

And what we have said of Balder in the oak forests of Scandinavia may perhaps, with all due diffidence in a question so obscure and uncertain, be applied to the priest of Diana, the King of the Wood, at Aricia in the oak forests of Italy. He may have personated in flesh and blood the great Italian god of the sky, Jupiter, who had kindly come down from heaven in the lightning flash to dwell among men in the mistletoe—the thunder-besom—the Golden Bough—growing on the sacred oak in the dells of Nemi. If that was so, we need not wonder that the priest guarded with drawn sword the mystic

bough which contained the god's life and his own. The goddess whom he served and married was herself, if I am right, no other than the Queen of Heaven, the true wife of the sky-god. For she, too, loved the solitude of the woods and the lonely hills, and sailing overhead on clear nights in the likeness of the silver moon looked down with pleasure on her own fair image reflected on the calm, the burnished surface of the lake, Diana's Mirror.

CHAPTER LXIX

FAREWELL TO NEMI

We are at the end of our enquiry, but as often happens in the search after truth, if we have answered one question, we have raised many more; if we have followed one track home, we have had to pass by others that opened off it and led, or seemed to lead, to far other goals than the sacred grove at Nemi. Some of these paths we have followed a little way; others, if fortune should be kind, the writer and the reader may one day pursue together. For the present we have journeyed far enough together, and it is time to part. Yet before we do so, we may well ask ourselves whether there is not some more general conclusion, some lesson, if possible, of hope and encouragement, to be drawn from the melancholy record of human error and folly which has engaged our attention in this book.

If then we consider, on the one hand, the essential similarity of man's chief wants everywhere and at all times, and on the other hand, the wide difference between the means he has adopted to satisfy them in different ages, we shall perhaps be disposed to conclude that the movement of the higher thought, so far as we can trace it, has on the whole been from magic through religion to science. In magic man depends on his own strength to meet the difficulties and dangers that beset him on every side. He believes in a certain established order of nature on which he can surely count, and which he can manipulate for his own ends. When he discovers his mistake, when he recognises sadly that both the order of nature which he had assumed and the control which he had believed himself to exercise over it were purely imaginary, he ceases to rely on his own intelligence and his own unaided efforts, and throws himself humbly on the mercy of certain great invisible beings behind the veil of nature, to whom he now ascribes all those far-reaching powers which he once arrogated to himself. Thus in the acuter minds magic is gradually superseded by religion, which explains the succession of natural phenomena as regulated by the will, the passion, or the caprice of spiritual beings like man in kind, though vastly superior to him in power.

But as time goes on this explanation in its turn proves to be unsatisfactory. For it assumes that the succession of natural events

is not determined by immutable laws, but is to some extent variable and irregular, and this assumption is not borne out by closer observation. On the contrary, the more we scrutinise that succession the more we are struck by the rigid uniformity, the punctual precision with which, wherever we can follow them, the operations of nature are carried on. Every great advance in knowledge has extended the sphere of order and correspondingly restricted the sphere of apparent disorder in the world, till now we are ready to anticipate that even in regions where chance and confusion appear still to reign, a fuller knowledge would everywhere reduce the seeming chaos to cosmos. Thus the keener minds, still pressing forward to a deeper solution of the mysteries of the universe, come to reject the religious theory of nature as inadequate, and to revert in a measure to the older standpoint of magic by postulating explicitly, what in magic had only been implicitly assumed, to wit, an inflexible regularity in the order of natural events, which, if carefully observed, enables us to foresee their course with certainty and to act accordingly. In short, religion, regarded as an explanation of nature, is displaced by science.

But while science has this much in common with magic that both rest on a faith in order as the underlying principle of all things, readers of this work will hardly need to be reminded that the order presupposed by magic differs widely from that which forms the basis of science. The difference flows naturally from the different modes in which the two orders have been reached. For whereas the order on which magic reckons is merely an extension, by false analogy, of the order in which ideas present themselves to our minds, the order laid down by science is derived from patient and exact observation of the phenomena themselves. The abundance, the solidity, and the splendour of the results already achieved by science are well fitted to inspire us with a cheerful confidence in the soundness of its method. Here at last, after groping about in the dark for countless ages, man has hit upon a clue to the labyrinth, a golden key that opens many locks in the treasury of nature. It is probably not too much to say that the hope of progress —moral and intellectual as well as material—in the future is bound up with the fortunes of science, and that every obstacle placed in the way of scientific discovery is a wrong to humanity.

Yet the history of thought should warn us against concluding that because the scientific theory of the world is the best that has yet been formulated, it is necessarily complete and final. We must remember that at bottom the generalisations of science or, in common parlance, the laws of nature are merely hypotheses devised to explain that ever-shifting phantasmagoria of thought which we dignify with the high-sounding names of the world and the universe. In the last analysis magic, religion, and science are nothing but theories of thought; and as science has supplanted its predecessors, so it may hereafter be itself superseded by some more perfect hypothesis, perhaps by some totally different way of looking at the phenomena—of registering the shadows on the screen—of which we in this generation can form no idea. The

advance of knowledge is an infinite progression towards a goal that for ever recedes. We need not murmur at the endless pursuit:

Fatti non foste a viver come bruti
Ma per seguir virtute e conoscenza.

Great things will come of that pursuit, though we may not enjoy them. Brighter stars will rise on some voyager of the future—some great Ulysses of the realms of thought—than shine on us. The dreams of magic may one day be the waking realities of science. But a dark shadow lies athwart the far end of this fair prospect. For however vast the increase of knowledge and of power which the future may have in store for man, he can scarcely hope to stay the sweep of those great forces which seem to be making silently but relentlessly for the destruction of all this starry universe in which our earth swims as a speck or mote. In the ages to come man may be able to predict, perhaps even to control, the wayward courses of the winds and clouds, but hardly will his puny hands have strength to speed afresh our slackening planet in its orbit or rekindle the dying fire of the sun. Yet the philosopher who trembles at the idea of such distant catastrophes may console himself by reflecting that these gloomy apprehensions, like the earth and the sun themselves, are only parts of that unsubstantial world which thought has conjured up out of the void, and that the phantoms which the subtle enchantress has evoked to-day she may ban to-morrow. They too, like so much that to common eyes seems solid, may melt into air, into thin air.

Without dipping so far into the future, we may illustrate the course which thought has hitherto run by likening it to a web woven of three different threads—the black thread of magic, the red thread of religion, and the white thread of science, if under science we may include those simple truths, drawn from observation of nature, of which men in all ages have possessed a store. Could we then survey the web of thought from the beginning, we should probably perceive it to be at first a chequer of black and white, a patchwork of true and false notions, hardly tinged as yet by the red thread of religion. But carry your eye farther along the fabric and you will remark that, while the black and white chequer still runs through it, there rests on the middle portion of the web, where religion has entered most deeply into its texture, a dark crimson stain, which shades off insensibly into a lighter tint as the white thread of science is woven more and more into the tissue. To a web thus chequered and stained, thus shot with threads of diverse hues, but gradually changing colour the farther it is unrolled, the state of modern thought, with all its divergent aims and conflicting tendencies, may be compared. Will the great movement which for centuries has been slowly altering the complexion of thought be continued in the near future? or will a reaction set in which may arrest progress and even undo much that has been done? To keep up our parable, what will be the colour of the web which the Fates are now weaving on the humming loom of time? will it be white or red? We

cannot tell. A faint glimmering light illumines the backward portion of the web. Clouds and thick darkness hide the other end.

Our long voyage of discovery is over and our bark has drooped her weary sails in port at last. Once more we take the road to Nemi. It is evening, and as we climb the long slope of the Appian Way up to the Alban Hills, we look back and see the sky aflame with sunset, its golden glory resting like the aureole of a dying saint over Rome and touching with a crest of fire the dome of St. Peter's. The sight once seen can never be forgotten, but we turn from it and pursue our way darkling along the mountain side, till we come to Nemi and look down on the lake in its deep hollow, now fast disappearing in the evening shadows. The place has changed but little since Diana received the homage of her worshippers in the sacred grove. The temple of the sylvan goddess, indeed, has vanished and the King of the Wood no longer stands sentinel over the Golden Bough. But Nemi's woods are still green, and as the sunset fades above them in the west, there comes to us, borne on the swell of the wind, the sound of the church bells of Aricia ringing the Angelus. *Ave Maria!* Sweet and solemn they chime out from the distant town and die lingeringly away across the wide Campagnan marshes. *Le roi est mort, vive le roi! Ave Maria!*

INDEX

Abbas the Great, Shah of Persia, 289
Abbot of Unreason, 586
Abchases of the Caucasus, 534
Abduction of souls by demons, 186
Abeokuta, the Alake of, 295
Abipones of Paraguay, 254
Abonsam, an evil spirit, 555
Abruzzi, the Carnival in the, 303
Abscesses, cure for, 539
Absence and recall of the soul, 180
Abstinence, 136, 138
Abydos, 366; specially associated with Osiris, 367
Abyssinia, rain-making in, 66; rain-making priests on the borders of, 107
Acagchemem tribe of California, 499
Acaill, Book of, 273
Acosta, J. de, 587
Acts, tabooed, 194-202
Adam of Bremen, 160
Adon, a Semitic title, 325
Adonis, and Aphrodite (Venus), 7, 8, 328; the myth of, 324-7; in Syria, 327-9; in Cyprus, 329-35; ritual of, 335-41; the gardens of, 341-7; in relation to the pig, 471
Adonis, the river, 328, 336
Adoption, pretence of birth at, 14
Adultery of wife thought to spoil the luck of absent husband, 23, 24
Aegira, priestess of Earth at, 94
Aegis, Athena and the, 477
Aeneas, and the Golden Bough, 3, 163, 703, 706, 707; his vision of the glories of Rome, 149
Aeolus, King of the Winds, 81
Aesculapius, 5, 111, 301
Afghanistan, ceremony at the reception of strangers in, 196
Africa, magicians, especially rain-makers, as chiefs and kings in, 84-6; human gods in, 98; rules of life or taboos observed by kings in, 169-72; reluctance of people to tell their own names in, 247; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 595; dread and seclusion of menstruous women in, 604; birth-trees in, 681
Africa, British Central, heart of lion eaten to make eater brave in, 495
——, East, seclusion and purification of man-slayers in, 214; infanticide in, 293; propitiation of dead lions in, 522
Africa, North, charms to render bridegroom impotent in, 241; Midsummer fires in, 631
——, South, rat's hair as a charm in, 31; continence in war in, 211; seclusion of man-slayers in, 214; disposal of cut hair and nails in, 235; magic use of spittle in, 237; personal names tabooed in, 247; rites of initiation in, 497; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 595; dread of menstruous women in, 604; story of the external soul in, 677
——, West, magical functions of chiefs in, 85; reverence for silk-cotton trees in, 112; kings forced to accept office in, 176; fetish kings in, 177; traps set for souls in, 187; purification after a journey in, 197; custom as to blood shed on the ground, 229; rain-charms, 234; negroes of, 236; human sacrifices in, 433, 570; propitiation of dead leopard in, 523; the external soul in, 684; ritual of death and resurrection in, 697
Afterbirth, contagious magic of, 39-41
Agar Dinka, the, 270
Agaric, superstitions as to, 618
Agdestis, a man-monster, 349
Age of magic, 55, 56
Agni, Indian fire-god, 708
Agricultural year, expulsion of demons timed to coincide with seasons of the, 575
Agrionia, festival at Orchomenus, 291
Agu, Mount, in Togo, wind-fetish on, 81; fetish priest on, 169
Ague, cure for, 545, 546
Aht of Nootka Indians, 599
Ainos, 481, 496, 515, 528, 530, 532; of Japan, 252, 505, 506, 660; of Saghalien, 20, 509
Akikuyu of British East Africa, 145, 604
Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp, Roman version of, 671
Alake, the, of Abeokuta, 295
Alaska, respect of hunters for dead sables and bears in, 525; expulsion of evils in, 555; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 600
Alba Longa, 148; kings of, 149
Alban dynasty, 149; hills, 148; lake, 149; mountain, 149, 150, 167

Albania, milk-stones in, 34; mock lamentations for locusts and beetles in, 531; expulsion of Kore on Easter Eve in, 560; the Yule log in, 638
Albanians of the Caucasus, 251, 571
Albigenses worshipped each other, 101
Alchemy leads up to chemistry, 92
Aleuts of Alaska, 221
Alexandria, festival of Adonis at, 335
Alexandrian calendar, 374; year, 373
Alfai, rain-making priest, 107
Alfoors, of the island of Buru, 250; of Central Celebes, 181, 690; of Halmahera, 548; of Minahassa, 94, 95, 186, 482, 492; of Poso, 248
Algeria, Midsummer fires in, 631
Algidus, Mount, 150, 164
Algonquins, 144
All-healer, name applied to mistletoe, 659-61
All Saints' Day, 634, 636
All Souls, feast of, 360
Allan, John Hay, on the Hays of Errol, 702
Allatu, Babylonian goddess, 326, 327
All-Hallows (All Saints' Day), 173
Almond, causes virgin to conceive, 347; the father of all things, 347
Alpheus, the sacred, 110
Alqamar, tribe of nomads, 64
Alsace, May-trees in, 121; the Little May Rose in, 125; stuffed goat or fox at threshing in, 457; cats burnt in Easter bonfires in, 656
Altmark, the May Bride at Whitsuntide in the, 135; Easter bonfires in the, 615, 616
Alvarado, Pedro de, Spanish general, 687
Amaxosa Caffres, 522
Amazon, Indians at the mouth of the, 581
Amboyna, rice in bloom treated like a pregnant woman, 115; ceremony to fertilise clove-trees in, 137; fear to lose the shadow at noon in, 191; sick people sprinkled with pungent spices in, 196; superstition regarding hair in, 680
America, power of medicine men in North, 87; continence in Central, 138; the Corn Mother in, 412; personification of maize in North, 419; first-fruit ceremonies in, 486, 487
American Indians, 29, 63, 82, 87, 111, 136, 138, 214, 244, 246, 252, 253, 256, 264, 522. *See also* North American Indians
Amethysts as charms, 34, 85
Ammon, the god, 142, 477, 500
Amoy, spirits who draw away the souls of children at, 186
Amphictyon, king of Athens, 155
Amulets, 109, 242, 243, 679, 680
Amulius Silvius, 149
Anabis, human god at, 96
Anaitis, Persian goddess, 331
Anatomie of Abuses, 123
Ancestor, wooden image of, 679
Ancestors, prayers to, 71; sacrifices to, 72; souls of, in trees, 115; names of, bestowed on their reincarnations, 256
Ancus Marcius, Roman king, 158
Andaman Islanders, 192
Anderida, forest of, 109
Andes, the Peruvian, 79; the Colombian, 101
Anemone, the scarlet, 336
Angamis, Eastern, of Manipur, 64
Angola, the Matiamvo of, 271
Angoni, the, 73, 214
Angoniland, rain-making in, 63
Angoy, king of, 273
Anhouri, Egyptian god, 265
Animal, killing the divine, 499-518; and man, sympathetic relation between, 700
Animals, homeopathic magic of, 31; association of ideas common to the, 54; rain-making by means of, 72; injured through their shadows, 190; propitiation of the spirits of slain, 217, 220; torn to pieces and devoured in religious rites, 390, 391; so-called unclean, originally sacred, 472; belief in the descent of men from, 473; resurrection of, 516, 528, 529; wild, propitiation of, 518-32; two forms of the worship of, 532; processions with sacred, 535; transference of evil to, 540-42; as scapegoats, 540, 565, 568, 570, 576; burnt at festivals, 655, 656; perhaps deemed embodiments of witches, 657, 658; external soul in, 683-91
Animism, the Buddhist, not a philosophical theory, 112; passing into polytheism, 117
Anjea, mythical being, 39
Anna Kuari, an Oraon goddess, 434
Annam, ceremonies observed when a whale is washed ashore in, 223
Anointing stones, in order to avert bullets from absent warriors, 26; in a rain-charm, 76
Anointment, of weapon which caused wound, 41; of priest at installation, 174
Anthropomorphism of the spirits of nature, 423
Antigonus, King, 97
Antioch, festival of Adonis at, 336, 346
Antrim, harvest customs in, 404
Ants, bites of, used in purificatory ceremonies, 195, 601; for lethargic patients, 495
Anubis, the jackal-headed god, 366, 367, 374
Anula tribe of Northern Australia, 64, 72, 693
Apaches, the, 76, 211
Apalai Indians, 195
Ape, a Batak totem, 691
Aphrodite, 4; and Adonis, 7, 327, 335; the mourning, of the Lebanon, 329; sanctuary of, 330; and Cinyras and Pygmalion, 332; her blood dyes white roses red, 336
Apis, sacred Egyptian bull, 335, 365, 476, 501
Apollo, prophetess of, 95; image of, in sacred cave at Hylae, 95; and Artemis, 120; at Delphi, 265; his musical contest with Marsyas, 354; identified with the Celtic Grannus, 611
Apollo Diradiotes, inspired priestess at temple of, 94

Apologies offered to trees, 113, 115, 116; by savages to the animals they kill, 520, 523
Apoyaos, head-hunters, 433
Apple-tree, barren women roll under, to obtain offspring, 120; straw man placed on oldest, 467; torches thrown at, 610; as life-index of boy, 682
Arab charms, 31, 242; name for the scarlet anemone, 336
Arabia, belief as to shadows in ancient, 190; camel as scapegoat in, 540
Arabian Nights, story of the external soul in the, 674
Arabs, of Moab, 32, 378; of North Africa, 70
Araucanians of South America, 245
Archigallus, high priest of Attis, 349, 353
Arctic regions, ceremonies at the reappearance of the sun in the, 551
Arden, forest of, 110
Ardennes, effigies of Carnival in the, 305; exorcising rats in the, 531; bonfires on the first Sunday in Lent, 609, 656; Lenten fires and customs in the French, 610
Aricia, 1, 2; many Manii at, 6, 491; its distance from the sanctuary, 106; the priest of, 582, 592, 593, 703
Arician grove, 5, 6, 301, 477-9, 491, 582, 704
Arizona, aridity of, 76
Armenia, rain-making in, 70; cut hair, nails, and extracted teeth preserved in, 236; sacred prostitution of girls before marriage in, 331
Arrows, in homeopathic magic, 29; in contagious magic, 41; fire-tipped, shot at sun during an eclipse, 78; shot as a rain-charm, 99
Arsacid house, divinity of Parthian kings of the, 104
Art, sylvan deities in classical, 117
Artemis, 120, 140, 141; and Hippolytus, 4-7; and Apollo, 120; of Ephesus, 141, 349; at Perga, 330; the Hanged, 355
Aru Islands, custom of not sleeping after a death in the, 182; dog's flesh eaten to make eater brave, 496
Arunta of Central Australia, 17, 603
Arval Brothers, 224, 578.
Aryan god of thunder, 638
Aryans, magical powers ascribed to kings, 89; in Europe, 110, 159, 161, 163, 656, 665; descent of kingship through women, 155; of ancient India, 490; their use of the sacred oak-wood, 666; stories of the external soul, 668; reverence for the oak, 709
Ascension Day, 312, 702
Ascetic idealism of the East, 139
Ash-tree in popular cures, 546, 682
Ash Wednesday 302, 304, 305, 461, 614
Ashantees, 497
Ashes, in magic, 30-32, 72, 76; of human victims scattered on fields, 378-80, 433, 436-8, 442, 443; of bonfires, use of, 611, 615, 621, 635, 645, 646; of Midsummer fires, 626, 629, 631, 632; of the Yule log, 637; of the need-fire, 640
Asia Minor, pontiffs in, 9; human scapegoats in, 579
Asongtata, annual ceremony performed by the Garos of Assam, 568
Asopus, the river, 143
Aspalis, a form of Artemis, 355
Ass, in cure for scorpion's bite, 544
Assam, the hill tribes of, taboos observed by the headman and his wife, 173, and by warriors, 212; parents named after their children in, 248; head-hunting in, 441; the Asongtata ceremony in, 568
Assumption of the Virgin, festival of, 360
Astarte, a great Babylonian goddess, 327, 335, 346
Athamas, king of Alus, 290-92
Athena and the *aegis*, 477
Athenian sacrifice of the *bouphonia*, 466
Athenians, decree divine honours to Demetrius Poliorcetes and his father Antigonus, 97; prayed to Zeus for rain, 159; their tribute of youths and maidens to Minos, 280; sacrifice to Dionysus for the fruits of the land, 386; their use of human scapegoats, 579
Athens, king and queen at, 9; titular king at, 106; marriage of Dionysus at, 142; female kinship at, 155; sacred spots struck by lightning at, 159; the Commemoration of the Dead at, 340; Dionysus of the Black Goatskin at, 390; annual sacrifice of a goat on the Acropolis of, 477; fever transferred to pillar at, 545
Atonement, Jewish Day of, 569
Attica, summer festival of Adonis in, 336; Flowery Dionysus in, 387; time of threshing in, 466; killing an ox formerly a capital crime in, 466
Attis, and Cybele, 4, 5, 8; myth and ritual of, 347-52; as a god of vegetation, 352, 353; human representatives of, 353-6; his relation to Lityerses, 440; killed by a boar, 471
Augustine, 359, 382
Augustus as a ruler, 46
Aun or On, King of Sweden, 278, 290
Aurelia Aemilia, a sacred harlot, 331
Australia, magical ceremonies in, 17; charms in, 32; contagious magic in, 38, 39, 42, 44, 45; magic practised but religion nearly unknown in aboriginal, 55; rain-making in, 64, 65, 72, 76; detaining the sun or hastening its descent in, 80; dust columns thought to be spirits in, 82; government of old men in aboriginal, 83; ceremony observed at approaching the camp of another tribe, 197; totemism in, 533; annual expulsion of ghosts in, 550; dread and seclusion of women at menstruation in, 603; initiation of young men in, 692
——, Central, magical ceremonies for the supply of food in, 17; charm to promote the growth of beards in, 32; contagious magic of wounds in, 42; headmen of totem clans public magicians in, 83; concealment of personal names in, 245; avoidance of the names of the dead in, 252; magical rites for the revival of nature in, 323; expelling the devil in, 548

Australia, Northern, homoeopathic magic of flesh diet in, 496
——, South-eastern, contagious magic of footprints in, 44, and of bodily impressions, 45; sex totems in, 687-9
——, Western, belief as to the placenta in, 39
Australian aborigines (blacks), 38, 39, 55, 80, 179, 190, 205, 207, 229, 234, 244, 251, 253, 254, 349, 533, 539, 551
Austria, charm to make fruit trees bear in, 28; belief in the sensitiveness of trees, 113; harvest customs in, 405; children warned against the Corn-cock in, 451; mythical calf in the corn in, 459; Midsummer fires in, 625; the mistletoe in, 663
Autumn-hen, last sheaf called, 451
Auvergne, Lenten fires in, 611
Auxerre, harvest customs in, 401, 459
Auxesia and Damia, 7
Awa-nkonde, the, 596
"Awasungu, house of the," 596
Axe, that slew ox, condemned, 466
Azo-mama (Potato-mother), 413
Aymara Indians, 73, 565
Azadirachta Indica, 72
Aztecs, 488, 587, 681

Ba-Pedi of South Africa, 209, 211, 220
Ba-Ronga of South Africa, 677
Ba-Thonga of South Africa, 211, 220
Baal, phrophets of, 66
Baba, name given to last sheaf, 404
Babar Archipelago, ceremony to obtain a child for barren woman in the, 14; saturnalia at marriage of Sun and Earth, 136-7; fatigue transferred to stones in the, 540
Babylon, theocratic despotism of ancient, 48; sanctuary of Bel at, 142; mortality of the high gods of, 265; festival of Zagmuk at, 281; festival of Sacaea at, 282; sanctified harlotry at, 330
Babylonia, divinity of the early kings, 104; worship of Adonis in, 325
Bacchanals of Thrace, ivy eaten by, 95; tore Pentheus in pieces, 378, 392; wore horns, 390
Bacchic frenzy, 29
Bacchus or Dionysus, 386. *See* Dionysus
Badagas of the Neilgherry Hills, 482, 541, 542
Badonsachen, king of Burma, 99
Baduwis of Java, 225
Baffin Land, expulsion of Sedna in, 552
Bag, souls of persons deposited in a, 186, 675, 679; soul of dying chief caught in a, 294, 295
Baganda of Central Africa, 40, 98, 137, 145, 523, 539, 604
Bagba, a wind-fetish, 81, 170
Bageshu of East Africa, 214
Bagobos of Minandao, 180, 355, 433
Bahaus. *See* Kayans
Bahima, of Central Africa, 257; of Uganda, 539
Bailly, J. S., French astronomer, 337
Balder, the myth of, 607-9; and the mistletoe, 608, 658-67, 701, 702, 710
Balder's Balefires, 625, 664
Bali, island of, rice personified as husband and wife in, 418; expulsion of devils in, 557
Ball-players, homoeopathic charms employed by, 29
Balls, gold and silver, to imitate the sun and moon, 121
Balong of the Cameroons, 685
Bangala of the Upper Congo, 247
Banjars in West Africa, 86
Banks' Islands, magical stones in the, 33; making sunshine in the, 78-9; ghosts in stones in the, 190; ceremony for getting rid of fatigue in the, 540
Banting in Sarawak, rules observed during absence of warriors at, 25
Bantu tribes, 209, 215
Banyoro, the, 85, 565
Barea of East Africa, 107
Barenton, the fountain of, 76, 77
Bari of the Upper Nile, 85
Barley, oldest cereal cultivated by the Aryans, 399
Barley-cow, 457, 458; -mother, 399; -sow, 460; -wolf, 448, 449
Baronga, the, of South Africa, 67, 71
Barren women. *See under* Women
Bashilange, reception of the subject chiefs by head chief among the, 198
Basque hunter transformed into bear, 692, 699
Bastard, name given to last sheaf, 406
Bastian, Adolf, 533
Basutos, 38, 192, 214
Bataks of Sumatra, 14, 40, 82, 184, 198, 541, 570, 690, 691
Batavia, rain-making in, 72
Batchelor, Rev. J., 506, 515, 516
Bathing as a rain-charm, 70
Bats, the lives of men in, 687, 688
Bavaria, charms in, 28; magic in, 29, 40, 42, 43; greasing weapon instead of wound in, 42; green bushes placed at doors of newly married pairs in, 119; the Maypole in, 124; the *Walber* in, 126; saying as to crossed legs in, 240; Whitsuntide mummers in Lower, 297; carrying out Death in, 307; contests between Summer and Winter in, 316; the corn-spirit in, 402; harvest customs in, 405, 426-8, 454, 456, 457, 461; cure for fever in, 544; expulsion of witches in, 561; Easter fires in, 616; Midsummer fires in, 623, 653
Bean, King of the, 586
Bean-cock, 451; -goat, 454
Bear, taboos concerning, 221; custom observed after killing a, 222; killing the sacred, 505
Beards, magic to promote growth of, 32
Beasts, sacred, held responsible for the course of nature in ancient Egypt, 87
Beating a man's garment instead of the man, 44; with rods in rain-making, 66; frogs, as a rain-charm, 73
Beauce and Perche, 40
Bechuanas, the, of South Africa, 31, 73, 197, 474, 484
Bed-clothes, contagious magic of bodily impressions on, 45
Bede, on the succession of Pictish kings, 156

Bedouins attack whirlwinds, 83
Beeches of Latium, 150
Beech-tree, in sacred grove of Diana, 8; burnt in Lenten bonfire, 612
Beena marriage, 152
Beer, continence observed at brewing, 219
Beetle, in magic, 31; superstitious precautions against beetles, 531; external soul in a, 674
Belgium, Lenten fires in, 609; Midsummer fires in, 630
Bella Coola Indians, 600
Bells, used in exorcism, 195, 568; to conjure spirits, 199; worn as amulets, 226; rung as a protection against witches, 560, 561
Beltane fires, 617-22, 653; cakes, 618-21; carline, 618
Benares, Hindoo gentleman worshipped as a god at, 100
Bengal, marriage ceremony at the digging of wells, 144; rule of succession of kings of, 277; ceremony over a Karma-tree in, 342; human sacrifices in, 434; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 602; stories of the external soul in, 670
Benin, king of, worshipped as a god, 99, 200; human sacrifices in, 433
Bera Pennu, Earth goddess, 434
Berawans of Sarawak, 15
Berbers of North Africa, 631
Berlin, treatment of navel-string in, 40
Besisis of the Malay Peninsula, 191
Besoms, burning, flung into the air to make corn grow, 647
Bethlehem, the Star of, 347
Betsileo of Madagascar, 229
Bhars of India, 565
Bhotiyas of Juhar, 569
Biajas of Borneo, the, 566
Bibili, of New Guinea, the natives reputed to make wind, 80
Bidasari and the golden fish, Malay story of, 676
Bilaspur or Bilaspore, twirling spindles forbidden in, 20; temporary rajah in, 287
Bilqula. *See* Bella Coola
Binbinga tribe of Northern Australia, 693
Birch-trees, 121, 128, 627
Bird, soul conceived as a, 181
Birds, cause headache through clipped hair, 234, 237; absent warriors called, 247; tongues of, eaten, 496; as scapegoats, 541, 545; external souls in, 670, 672, 675-7
Birth, pretence of, 14, 15, 197, 406, 421; a man's fortune determined by the day and hour of his, 37; new, 351, 697
Birth-trees, in Africa, 681; in Europe, 682
Bitch, last sheaf called the, 449
Bithynia, song of reapers in, 425
Black colour in rain-making ceremonies, 67; animals in rain-charms, 72, 161
Blackfoot Indians, 21, 22, 524
Blindness, charm to cause, 30
Blood, sympathetic connection between a wounded person and his shed, 43; human, in rain-making ceremonies, 65; as a means of inspiration, 94; smeared on woodwork of house, 117; put on doorposts, 175; of childbirth, 209, 229; smeared on person as a purification, 221; tabooed, 227-30; royal, not to be shed on the ground, 228; unwillingness to shed, 228; received on bodies of kinsfolk, 229; drops of, effaced, 229; of chief sacred, 230; fetish priests allowed to drink fresh, 238; Day of, in the festival of Attis, 349, 353; bath of bull's, in the rites of Attis, 351; remission of sins through the shedding of, 356; sprinkled on seed and scattered on field, 432, 434, 438; of sacrificial horse, 478; of men drunk to acquire their qualities, 497, 498; as a means of communion with a deity, 535; of children used to knead a paste, 553; girls at puberty forbidden to see, 600; menstruous, 603, 604
Blood-brotherhood, 113; -covenant, 202
Blu-u Kayans of Borneo, 195
Boa-constrictor, Caffres' dread of, 222
Boar, in magic, 31; and Adonis, 325, 471; Attis killed by a, 347, 471; corn-spirit as, 460; the Yule, 461, 462; Christmas, 462
Boas, Dr. Franz, 699
Boba, name given to the last sheaf, 405
Bodio, fetish king, 86
Boeotians, the, 143, 371
Bogota, rigorous training of the heir to the throne of, 595
Bohemia, Midsummer tree burned in, 122; throwing Death into the water in, 125; May King and Queen in, 130-32; Whitsuntide mummers in, 298, 299; carrying out Death in, 309, 310; bringing in Summer in, 311; the last sheaf in, 404; harvest customs in, 429, 456, 457; cure for fever in, 544; expulsion of witches in, 561; bonfires in, 621, 626; charm to make corn grow high in, 647; fern-seed on St. John's Day in, 704, 705
Boils, 473
Bolivia, seclusion of girls at puberty in, 601
Bombay, belief as to absence of sleeper's soul in, 183
Bones, of dead in magic, 30, 71; human, buried as a rain-charm, 72; departing souls bottled up in hollow, 180; used as charms, 201, 495; cakes baked in the shape of, 489; of animals, treatment of, 525-9; burnt in bonfires, 616
Bonfires, Midsummer, 122, 622, 629, 645; leaping over, 318, 610; supposed to protect against conflagration, 610; lit by persons last married, 610; a protection against sickness, witchcraft, and sorcery, 610, 620, 621; fertilising influence of, 645, 646; protect fields against hail and homesteads against thunder and lightning, 649
Boni, Commendatore G., 163
Bontoc, the natives of, 433
Bormus or Borimus, 425, 442
Borneo, the Dyaks of, 14; rules observed by camphor-hunters in, 21; telepathy in war in, 25; hooks to catch souls in, 180; rice used to prevent soul from wandering, 181; precautions against strangers in, 195; use of puppets as substitutes for living persons, 492; sickness expelled in a ship from, 564; expulsion of evils in, 566; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 597; birth custom in, 679; tree as life-index in, 682

Bororos of Brazil, 181, 484
Bosnian Turks, 15
Bough, the Golden. *See* Golden Bough
Bouphonia, Athenian sacrifice, 466
Boys, at initiation, 692, 696
Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, the Hindoo trinity, 52
Brahmans, 33, 67, 79, 100, 227, 245, 285, 288, 343, 490
Brains of enemies eaten, 498
Branches, used in rain-charm, 63, 64; in exorcism, 197; fatigue and sickness transferred to, 540, 564
Brand, John, 636, 637
Brandy, North American Indian theory of, 496
Bray, Mrs., 446
Brazil, Indians of, 88, 181, 495, 523, 581; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 601
Bread, leavened, Flamen Dialis forbidden to touch, 174; fast from, in mourning for Attis, 350; communion, 481; eaten sacramentally, 488, 498
Bread-fruit, 33
Breath, of chief sacred, 205, 231; caught by his successor, 294
Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, 101
Breton superstitions as to tides, 35; peasants' way of getting rain, 76; stories of the external soul, 674; peasants and the mistletoe, 704
Brewing, continence observed at, 219
Bribri Indians, the, 208, 605
Bride, the Whitsuntide, 132, 135; the May, 135; races for a, 156; fishing-net thrown over, 242; of the Nile, 370; name given to last sheaf, 408
Bride and bridegroom, the Whitsuntide, 133; the Midsummer, 133; all knots on their garments unloosed, 241
Bridegroom, the Whitsuntide, 133; of May, 133, 320
Bridget in Scotland and the Isle of Man, 134
Brigit, a Celtic goddess, 135
Brimo and Brimos in the mysteries of Eleusis, 143
British Columbia. *See* Columbia, British
Brittany, belief as to death at ebb-tide in, 35; the Mother-sheaf in Upper, 401; Midsummer fires in, 628; mistletoe as a protection against witchcraft in, 704; fern-seed on Midsummer Eve in, 705
Brooke, Rajah, of Sarawak, 89
Brotherhood of the Green Wolf, 628
Brothers, childless persons named after their younger, 248; ancient Egyptian story of the Two, 674
—— and sisters, marriage of, 332
Brothers-in-law, their names not to be pronounced, 250, 251
Brown, Dr. George, 84
Buddha, images of, drenched as a rain-charm, 77; the Footprint of, 235
Buddhas, living, 102
Buddhism, 112; and Christianity, 361
Buffalo, sacrificed for human victim, 436; a Batak totem, 691
Buffalo-bull, last sheaf called, 457
Buffaloes, propitiation of dead, 523; the resurrection of, 529; revered by the Todas, 534; as scapegoats, 565
Buginese of Celebes, 33
Building, continence during, 220
Bukaua of New Guinea, 597, 694
Bulgaria, 15; charms in, 30, 31; peasants threaten fruit trees to make them bear, 114; superstitions in, 240; harvest customs in, 405; cure for fever in, 545; need-fire in, 640
Bull, in relation to Dionysus, 389, 390; corn-spirit as, 457, 465; at threshing, 458, 459
Bull's blood, bath of, in rites of Attis, 351
Bull-roarers, 692-5
Bullets, magical treatment of, 19; magical modes of averting, 26
Bullocks as scapegoats, 541
Bulls, sacred, of Ancient Egypt, 476
Bunyoro, king of, 199, 270
Burghers or Badagas. *See* Badagas.
Burglars, charms employed by, 30
Burial customs, 35, 175, 185, 190
Burma, priestly king in, 226, 227; king's name tabooed in, 257; custom of threshing in, 418; expulsion of demons in, 549
Burne, Miss C. S., 446
Buru, East Indian island, girl sacrificed to crocodile in, 145; eating the soul of the rice in, 482; dog's flesh eaten in, 496
Burying the Carnival, 301-7
Bush negroes of Surinam, 166, 473
Bushmen of South Africa, 495, 604
Busiris, backbone of Osiris at, 367; ritual of Osiris at, 375; "the house of Osiris," 443
Busiris, king of Egypt, 443
Butter, time for making, 35
Buzzard, killing the sacred, 499
Byblus, Adonis at, 327; Osiris and Isis at, 364

Cacongo, king of, 199
Cactus, the sacred, 23
Cadiz, death at low tide at, 35
Caesar, Julius, 46, 653
Caffres, the, 222, 235, 247-9, 522; of Sofala, 33; of Natal and Zululand, 483
Cailleach (Old Wife), name given to last corn cut, 403, 409
Cairo, ceremony of cutting the dams at, 370
Cajaboneros Indians, the, 138
Calabar, expulsion of demons at Old, 492, 567; soul of chief in sacred grove at, 681; belief of negroes regarding external souls, 686
Calabashes, souls shut up in, 188
Calabria, Easter custom in, 345; annual expulsion of witches in, 560
Calendar, the ancient Greek, 279; regulation of the early, an affair of religion, 280; the Egyptian, 368; the Alexandrian, 373; of Esne, 373; the Mohammedan, 631
Calf, killed at harvest, 458; mythical, in the corn, 459
Calicut, rule of succession observed by the kings of, 275-7, 296

California, the shaman in, 88; killing the sacred buzzard in, 499; Indians of, 599, 707
Caligula and the priest of Nemi, 3
Cambodia, homœopathic magic used by hunters in, 18; human incarnation of god in, 95; kings of, 108, 167, 224, 266, 284, 289; superstitions regarding the head in, 230; annual expulsion of demons in, 559; palace purged of demons, 563; seclusion of girls at puberty, 602; ritual at cutting a parasitic orchid in, 660, 661
Cambodian story of the external soul, 668
Camel, plague transferred to, 540
Cameroons, the external soul in the, 681; theory of, 685
Camomile, burnt in Midsummer fire, 631
Camp shifted after a death, 252
Campbell, Major-General John, 436, 437
——, Rev. J. G., 403
Camphor, 21, 24
Canadian Indians, 525, 526
Candlemas, 134, 461
Candles, 3; magical, 30; of human tallow, 56
Cannibal feast, legendary, at the Boeotian Orchomenus, 292
Cannibalism, 233, 391, 497
Caprification, 580
Car Nicobar, expulsion of devils in, 567
Caramantran, death of, 304
Caribs, the, 27, 495, 690
Carinthia, Green George in, 126; ceremony at the installation of a prince of, 287; custom at threshing in, 429
Carlin or Carline, "the Old Woman," in Scotland, 403
Carnival, dances at the, 28; burying the, 298, 301-7; the burial and resurrection of the, 315; at Rome in the rites of Attis, 350; in relation to the Saturnalia, 586; effigy burnt at end of, 614
Carolina, Indians of, 519
Caroline Islands, 40, 218; traditionary origin of fire in the, 707
Carpathus, laying out of corpses in, 243
Carrier Indians of North-West America, 18, 219, 606
"Carrying out Death," 125, 302, 307-16, 577, 613, 614
Carthage, Christians worshipping each other at, 101; the effeminate priests of the Great Mother at, 356
Carthaginian sacrifice of children to Moloch, 281
Carver, Captain Jonathan, 698
Castration, 347, 350
Cat, in homœopathic magic, 32; in rain-charm, 72; corn-spirit as, 453; killed at harvest, 453; a representative of the devil, 656; story of a clan whose souls were all in one, 677; a Batak totem, 691. *See also* Cats
Cat's cradle as a charm, 20, 79; forbidden to boys among the Esquimaux, 20
Catat, Dr., 193
Caterpillars, precautions against, 531
Catholic Church, 335, 345
Catholic custom of dedicating candles, 3; as to partaking of the Eucharist, 488
Catlin, George, 88
Cats, burnt in bonfires, 610, 656; perhaps burnt as witches, 657
Cattle, magical stones for increase of, 33; influence of tree-spirits on, 119; crowned, 126; protected against wolves by charms, 242; last sheaf given to, 400, 407, 408, 412; Yule Boar given to the, 462; driven through, round, or between bonfires, 615, 620, 621, 624, 626-8, 640, 641; protected against sorcery by sprigs of mullein, 629; lighted brands carried round, 647
Cattle disease, Midsummer fires a protection against, 627; plague, need-fire kindled as a remedy for, 641
Caucasus, rain-making in the, 70; sacraments of pastoral tribes in the, 534
Cayor in Senegal, the king of, 172
Cazembes of Angola, the, 203
Cecrops, king of Athens, 155
Cedar, sacred, 95
Cedar-tree, girl sacrificed to a, 112
Celebes, rain-charms in, 70; hooking souls in, 180; customs at childbirth in, 180; ceremonies for recovering souls in, 186; propitiation of souls of slain enemies in, 212; planting the rice in, 416; customs as to eating the new rice in, 482; the external soul in, 679
Celtic sacrifices, 653, 657; tales of the external soul, 673
Celts, their worship of the oak, 110, 160; annual sacrifice to Artemis, 141; fire-festivals of the, 632
Ceram, island of, sickness expelled in a ship from, 563; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 597; the Kakian association in, 696
Ceres, the, in France, 401
Cetchwayo, king of Zululand, 257
Ceylon, ogres in, 669; king of, and his external soul, 669, 670
Chaka, the Zulu despot, 86
Chams of Cochinchina, 29, 220
Charms, to ensure long life, 35; to prevent the sun from going down, 79; to facilitate childbirth, 238
Chasas of Orissa, 473
Chastity observed for sake of absent persons, 23, 24; as a virtue not understood by savages, 139. *See also* Continence
Chatti, German tribe, 232
Cheese, the Beltane, 620
Chent-Ament, title of Osiris, 375
Cheremiss of Caucasus, the 262, 560
Cherokees, the, 29, 40, 372, 520
Chibchas, the, 104
Chicomecohuatl, Mexican goddess, 589
Chiefs, supernatural power of, in Melanesia, 84; as magicians, 84; punished for drought and dearth, 86; tabooed, 202; sacred, 205; foods tabooed to, 238; names of, tabooed, 257-9
Chilcotin Indians, 78
Child, name given to last sheaf, 406; born on harvest field, pretence of, 406
Childbed, woman in, thought to control the wind, 80; souls of women dying in, live in trees, 115; taboos on women in, 208

Childbirth, precautions taken with mother at, 180, 181; women tabooed at, 207, 208; knots untied at, 238; homoeopathic magic to facilitate, 239
Children, taboos observed by, 21, 22; buried to the neck as a rain-charm, 75; parents named after their, 248; sacrificed, 281, 293, 380, 431; blood of, used to knead a paste, 553
Chilote Indians, 237
China, emperors of, 9; charms in, 35; geomancy in, 36; modes of compelling the rain-god to give rain in, 74; trees planted on graves in, 115; convulsions attributed to the action of demons in, 186; custom as to shadows at funerals in, 190; ceremony at the beginning of spring in, 468; popular superstitions in, 498; human scapegoats in, 566; expulsion of evils in, 567
Chinese empire, incarnate human gods in the, 103
Chinigchinich, Californian god, 499, 500
Chinna Kimedy, in India, 436
Chinook Indians, 256, 599
Chins, the, 551
Chippeway Indians, 605
Chiquites Indians of Paraguay, 526
Chiriguanos of South America, 601
Chitome or Chitombé, a pontiff of Congo, 170, 266, 296
Chittagong, 239
Choctaws, the, 215
Cholera, demon of, 549, 551, 563; sent away in animal scapegoats, 565
Christ, his Nativity, 358; his crucifixion, 359; his resurrection, 359, 360
Christian festivals displace heathen festivals, 360
Christianity, its conflict with the Mithraic religion, 358; and Buddhism, 361
Christians, pretenders to divinity among, 101
Christmas, festival of, borrowed from the Mithraic religion, 358; heathen origin of, 359
Christmas Boar, 462; candles, 637
Church bells, a protection against witchcraft, 560
Ciminian forest, the, 110
Cingalese cure by means of devil-dancers, 542
Cinyras, father of Adonis, 327, 328, 332
Circassia, custom as to pear-trees in, 119
Circe, the land of, 150
Circumcision, 229, 694
Claudius, the Emperor, 3, 348
Clayton, Rev. A. C., 542
Clothes, magic sympathy between a person and his, 43, 44
Clotilde, Queen, 232
Clove trees treated like pregnant women, 115
Cloves, ceremony to make them grow, 137
Clucking-hen at threshing, 451
Clyack sheaf, 408, 425
Coast Murring tribe of New South Wales, 643
Cobra, ceremony after killing a, 222
Coca-mother, among the Peruvians, 413
Coco-nuts sacred in Northern India, 119
Cock, corn-spirit as, 450; name given to last sheaf, 451
Cockatoos, magical multiplication of, 17
Coel Coeth, Hallowe'en bonfire, 635
Coins, from the eyes of corpses, 31; portraits of kings not stamped on, 193
Columbia, British, use of magical images to procure fish in, 18; taboos imposed on parents of twins in, 66; belief regarding a physician and his patient's soul, 189; Indians' dislike of telling their own names, 246; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 600; rites of initiation in, 699
Combs, when not to be used, 24, 174, 215, 216
Commagny, the priory of, 77
Communion with deity by eating new fruits, 487
Communion bread, 481
Compitalia, festival of the, 491
Conception in women caused by trees, 119
Congo, recall of stray souls among the tribes, 184; conjuring spirits before drinking in the, 199; royal persons forbidden to touch the ground, 594; rites of initiation on the Lower, 697
Connaught, taboos observed by the ancient kings of, 173
"Consort, the divine," 142
Constantine, the Emperor, 331
Consumption, cure for, 545
Contact or contagion in magic, law of, 11
Continence, required during search for sacred cactus, 23; practised before fertility ceremonies, 136; practised in order to make crops grow, 138; enjoined on people during rounds of sacred pontiff, 170; of priests, 170; on eve of period of taboo, 173; during war, 210, 211; after victory, 212; by hunters and fishers, 217; by workers in saltpans, 219; at brewing, 219; at house-building, 220; at making and repairing dams, 220; by lion-killers and bear-killers, 221, 222; at festival of first-fruits, 486
Cords, knotted, in magic, 241
Corea, kings responsible for rain and crops, 87; offerings to souls of the dead in trees in, 115; king not to be touched, 224; means of inspiring courage in, 496; use of torches to ensure good crops in, 647
Corinthians make images of Dionysus out of a pine-tree, 387
Cormac Mac Art, king of Ireland, 273
Corn, spirit of the, embodied in human beings, 419; double personification of, as mother and daughter, 420
Corn-baby, 459; -bull, 458; -cat, 453; -cock, 451; -cow, 457; -foal, 460; -goat, 454; -pug, 449; -sow, 448, 460; -steer, 457; -wolf, 450
—— -god, Adonis as a, 338; Attis as a, 353; Osiris as a, 376
—— -mother, 143, 399, 412
—— -reapers, songs of the, 424

Corn-spirit, Adonis as a, 338; represented by human victims, 339; represented as a dead old man, 372; killing the, 425-431; slain in his human representatives, 438-47; how representative was chosen, 439; as an animal, 447-64.
Corn-medicine festival, 419, 420
Cornwall, temporary king in, 287
Cos, sanctuary of Aesculapius in, 111; harvest-home in, 396
Costa Rica, 605
Cottonwood trees, the shades or spirits of, 111, 112
Courland, custom of sowing in, 461
Cow, ceremony of rebirth from a golden, 197; sacred to Isis, 373; corn-spirit as, 457; as scapegoat, 565, 571; witches steal milk from, 648; mistletoe given to, 663
Creator, the grave of the, 264
Creek Indians, 211, 484, 605
Cretan festival of Dionysus, 389, 390
Crete, milk-stones in, 34
Crevaux, J., 195
Criminals shorn to make them confess, 680
Cripple Goat, last sheaf called, 455
Crocodile, girl sacrificed to a, 145
Crocodiles, Malay charm to catch, 19; spared by savages out of respect, 518
Cronus, his sacrifice of his son, 293
Crops, charms to promote the growth of the, 28, 288, 610, 613, 614, 624, 645; intercourse of the sexes to promote the growth of the, 136; human victims sacrificed for the, 355, 431; superstitious devices to get rid of vermin in the, 530; supposed to be spoiled by menstruous women, 604, 606
"Cross of the Horse," first sheaf called, 460
Cross-road, fever deposited at, 544; offerings at, 557; ceremonies at, 561; Midsummer fires lighted at, 625
"Crying the Mare" in Hertfordshire, 459
"Crying the neck" in Devonshire, 445
Crystals, magic of, 38, 76, 85
Cumanus, the inquisitor, 681
Cumont, Professor Franz, 584
Cup-and-ball as a charm, 80
Cybele, Mother of the Gods, 347; worship of, 348
Cynaetha, festival of Dionysus at, 390
Cyprus, sacred prostitution in, 330
Cytisorus, son of Phrixus, 290, 291
Cyzicus, council chamber at, 225

Dacotas, 529
Daedala, festival of the, 143
Dahomey, the king of, 172, 199, 257
Dairi, the, or Mikado of Japan, 168, 169
Dairies, sacred, of the Todas, 175
Dalai Lama of Lhasa, 103
Dalmatia, belief as to the souls of trees in, 112
Damia and Auxesia, 7
Dams, continence at making, 220; in Egypt, 369, 370
Danae, the story of, 602
Dances, of women while men are away fighting, 26, 27; to make hemp grow, 28; for rain, 64; round sacred trees, 118; round the May-pole, 122, 124, 126; round bonfires, 122, 610-12, 614, 620, 621, 625, 628-30; to fertilise gardens, 137; of king, 200; of successful head-hunters, 212; to propitiate souls of slain foes, 212; of victory, 213; of harvesters, 401, 427, 460; at festival of first-fruits, 486; at burial of the wren, 537; masked, 542
Danger Island, snares for souls in, 187
Danish magic of footprints, 44
Danzig, disposal of cut hair at, 235; last sheaf at harvest at, 400
Daramulun, a mythical being, 692, 693
Darfur, Sultan of, 200; people of, believe the liver to be the seat of the soul, 497
Date-palm, artificial fertilisation of the, 582
Day of Blood, in rites of Attis, 350; of Atonement, 569
De Barros, Portuguese historian, 277
Dead, the, homoeopathic magic of, 30; spirits of, 47; making rain by means of, 71; trees animated by the souls of, 115; sacrifices to, 175; taboos on persons who have handled, 205; names of, tabooed, 251-6; appear to the living in dreams, 256; festival of, 373, 633; worship of, 414; ghosts of, 551
Dead Sunday, 302
Death, pretence of, 16; "carrying out," 125, 302, 307-16, 577, 613, 614; at ebb tide, 167, 168; mourners forbidden to sleep in a house after a, 182; custom of covering up mirrors after a, 192; from imagination, 204; ritual of, and resurrection, 691-711
Deir el Bahari, paintings at, 142
Deities duplicated through dialectical differences in their names, 164, 165; of vegetation as animals, 464-79
Deity, savage conception of, 92
Demeter, married to Zeus at Eleusis, 142; and Persephone, 393-8, 420; etymology of her name, 399; in relation to the pig, 469; horse-headed, of Phigalia, 471; Black, 471
Demetrius Poliorcetes, deified, 97
Demons, of trees, 116; abduction of souls by, 186; and ghosts averse to iron, 226; deceived by effigies, 492; of disease exorcised, 542; omnipresence of, 546; of cholera, 549, 551; men disguised as, 562; conjured into images, 568
Déné Indians, the, 208
Denmark, Whitsuntide customs in, 133; Yule Boar in, 461; Midsummer fires in, 625
Departmental kings of nature, 106-9
Depilation, 681
Deputy, expedient of dying by, 278, 289
Devil-dancers, 542
Devils. *See* Demons
Devonshire, harvest customs in, 445.
Dharmé, the Sun-god, 145
DI, Aryan root meaning "bright," 164
Diana, 1, 3, 8; the Tauric, 2, 3, 6; goddess of childbirth, 3, 141; goddess of fertility, 139-42, 163; and Dianus, 161-7

"Diana's Mirror," 1, 711
Dianus and Diana, 161-7
Dieri of Central Australia, the, 64, 65, 115, 548, 603
Dinkas, the, 269, 565
Diodorus Siculus, 365
Dione, wife of Zeus at Dodona, 151; the old consort of Zeus, 165
Dionysus, 142, 265, 378; god of the vine, 386; god of trees, 387; the Flowery, 387; god of agriculture and the corn, 387; and the winnowing fan, 388; horned, 390; live animals rent in the rites of, 390, 391; as a goat, 390, 464; human sacrifices in his rites, 392; torn in pieces at Thebes, 392; as a bull, 464, 465; relations to Pans, Satyrs, and Silenuses, 464; his resurrection perhaps enacted in his rites, 468
Disease, demons of, expelled, 196, 542; transferred to other people and to effigies, 539; sent away in little ships, 563
Divination, 256, 634, 635
Divine animal, killing the, 499; as scapegoat, 570, 576
"Divine Consort, the," 142
Divine Husbandman, in China, 468
Divining rods, 705
Divinities, human, bound by many rules, 262
Divinity of kings, 162; growth of the conception of the, 162, 163
Divorce of spiritual from temporal power, 175-8
Dobrizhoffer, Father M., 254, 255
Dodona, oracular spring at, 147; Zeus and Dione at, 151; oracular oak at, 159
Dodwell, E., 397
Dog, black, sacrificed for rain, 73; used to stop rain, 75; prohibition to touch or name, 174; corn-spirit as, 448; of the harvest, 449
Dogs crowned, 3
Dollar-bird associated with rain, 72
Donar or Thunar, German thunder-god, 160
Doors opened to facilitate childbirth, 239; to facilitate death, 243
Dos Santos, J., 97
Dosuma, king of, 593
Doves, external soul in, 670; Aeneas led to the Golden Bough by, 703
Dragon, rain-god represented as, 74; or serpent of water, 146; at Midsummer, effigy of, 655
Dramas, magical, 140, 324; sacred, 374
Dreams, absence of soul in, 181; belief of savages in the reality of, 181; festival of, 553
Drenching people with water as a rain-charm, 69, 70, 341, 342
"Drink, Black," an emetic, 486
Drinking and eating, taboos on, 198, 199; modes of drinking for tabooed persons, 199, 208, 211, 219
Drought, supposed to be caused by the unburied dead, 72; chiefs and kings punished for, 86; supposed to be caused by a concealed miscarriage, 209
Druidical festivals, so-called, 617
Druids, 110, 249, 653, 654, 657, 659; of Ireland, 621; and the mistletoe, 709, 710
Duchesne, Mgr., 360
Dugong fishing, taboos in connection with, 217
Dulyn, the tarn of, on Snowdon, 76
Dunkirk, the Follies of, 654
Durian-tree, the, 113
Dusuns of Borneo, the, 225, 566
Dyaks, of Borneo, 14, 16, 25, 182, 248, 249, 413, 496, 518; of Landak, 682; of Pinoeh, 679; of Sarawak, 498; Sea, 239, 531; of Tajan, 682

Eagle, the bird of Jove, 149
Eagle-hunters, 21, 22
Eagle-owl worshipped by the Ainos, 515
Earth, inspired priestess of, 94; marriage of the Sun and, 145; image of, praying to Zeus for rain, 159; Lithuanian prayers to the, 480; the priest of, 594
Earth demons, 492; goddess, 396, 434-7
Earthworms eaten by dancing girl, 497
East, ascetic idealism of the, 139
East Indian Islands, magic in the, 18, 21; epilepsy transferred to leaves in the, 539; demons of sickness expelled in little ships, 564
East Indies, pregnant women forbidden to tie knots, 238; reluctance of persons to tell their own names, 246; bringing back the Soul of the Rice, 372; the Rice-mother in the, 413
Easter, resemblance of the festival of, to the rites of Adonis, 345; assimilated to the spring festival of Attis, 359; controversy as to the origin of, 361
Easter Eve, ceremonies on, 400, 560; Saturday new fire on 614; Sunday ceremony observed by gypsies on, 568; Monday, festival on, 126; candle, 614; fires, 614
Eating, out of sacred vessels, 169; together, 202; and drinking, taboos on, 198; eating the god, 479-94, 498; the soul of the rice, 482
Ebb tide, death at, 35
Eclipse, ceremonies at an, 78
Ecuador, human sacrifices in, 431
Edgewell Tree, the, 682
Effigies, 468, 491, 492, 539, 568, 609, 612-614, 622, 624, 625, 630, 648, 650, 655, 658; of Carnival, 302; of Death, 307, 311; of Judas, 615; of Kupalo, Kostroma, and Yarilo, 318; of Osiris, 376, 382; of Shrove Tuesday, 305
Efugaos, the, of the Philippines, 498
Egbas, the, of West Africa, 273
Egeria, water-nymph, 4, 8, 147, 151, 152, 161
Egerius Baebius or Laevius, 5
Egg-shells, the breaking of, 201
Egypt, the Nativity of the Sun at the winter solstice in, 358; in early June, 369; the gods flee into, 391; the corn-spirit in, 443

Egypt, ancient, theocratic despotism of, 48; magicians in, 52, 261; confusion of magic and religion in, 53; ceremonies for the regulation of the sun, 78; kings blamed for the failure of the crops in, 87; sacred beast responsible for the course of nature in, 87; human gods in, 96, 265; kings of, 104, 142, 174, 238, 333, 378; queen of, 142; personal names in, 245; reapers' lamentations and invocations to Isis in, 338, 371, 424, 443, 444; sacrifice of red-haired men in, 378, 379; human sacrifices in, 443; religious attitude to pigs in, 472; rams, sacred in, 500; bulls as scapegoats in, 571; story of the external soul in, 674
——, Lower, Sais in, 373
——, Upper, temporary kings in, 286
Egyptian calendar, 368; festivals, 368, 369; religion, 370; types of sacrament, 532-5
Elders, council of, in savage communities, 47
Elephant hunters, 23, 594
Elephants, ceremonies observed at the slaughter of, 522, 524; lives of persons bound up with those of, 685
Eleusine grain, 483
Eleusinian mysteries, 142, 393-5, 397, 398; priests, 259
Eleusis, rites of Demeter at, 376, 397; Demeter at, 393; Rarian plain at, 394
Elfin race averse to iron, 226
Elipandus of Toledo, 101
Elis, Dionysus hailed as a bull by the women of, 390
Elisha, the prophet, 334
Elk clan of the Omaha Indians, 474
Embalming as a means of prolonging the life of the soul, 265
Emblica officinalis sacred in Northern India, 119
Emin Pasha, 196
Empedocles, his claim to divinity, 96
Emu-wrens, 689
Encounter Bay tribe, 603
Endymion, 4, 156
England, belief as to death at ebb tide in, 35; anointing the weapon instead of the wound in, 42; May-trees and May-bushes in, 121; village May-poles in, 123; Jack-in-the-Green in, 129; undoing locks and bolts at a death in, 243; Harvest Queen in, 405; harvest customs in, 406, 459, 460; killing the wren in, 536; the Yule log in, 637; the mistletoe in, 662, 663; birth-trees in, 682; cure for rupture or rickets in, 682
Epilepsy transferred to leaves, 539
Epiphany, 359, 462, 561
Ergamenes, king of Meroe, 266
Erman, Professor, 377
Escouvion or *Scouvion*, in Belgium, 610
Esne, festal calendar of, 373
Esquimaux, 20, 82, 179, 244, 317, 529; of Alaska, 551, 679; of Baffin Land, 552; of Bering Strait, 193, 220, 221, 227, 526, 606; of Iglulik, 79
Esthonia, Shrove Tuesday customs in, 315; harvest customs in, 456, 460; Christmas Boar in, 462; Midsummer fires in, 628
Esthonians, 81, 225, 228, 307, 481, 530
Ethiopia, kings of, 200, 273
Eubuleus, legendary swine-herd, 469, 470
Eucharist, 488
Eudoxus of Cnidus, 474
Eunuch priests, 349, 352
Europe, dancing or leaping high to make crops grow in, 28; the Hand of Glory in, 30; belief as to death at ebb tide in, 35; treatment of the navel-string and after-birth in, 40; contagious magic in, 44; confusion of magic and religion in, 53, 54; belief in magic in modern, 56; rain-making ceremonies in, 69; the May-pole or May-tree in, 119, 120; Midsummer festival in modern, 153; fear of having one's likeness taken in, 194; belief as to consummation of marriage being impeded by locks and knots, 240; the Corn-mother in Northern, 399-412; comparison between the Lityerses story and harvest customs in, 426-31; "hunting the wren" in, 536; transference of evil in, 543-6; annual expulsion of demons among the heathen of, 559; annual expulsion of witches in Central, 560; expulsion of embodied evils in, 568; the mistletoe in, 661; superstitions as to menstruous women in, 606; fire-festivals of, 609-41; Midsummer fires in, 622; need-fire in, 638
Evil, transference of, 538-46; to animals, 540-42; to men, 542-3; in Europe, 543-6
Evils, expulsion of, public, 546; occasional, 547; periodic, 551; embodied, 562; occasional, in a material vehicle, 563; periodic, in a material vehicle, 568
Ewe-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast, the, 112, 198; taboos observed by their kings, 172
Exogamy, 152
Eyeos, the, 172, 273
Ezekiel, the prophet, 327

Face, of sleeper not to be painted or disfigured, 183; taboos on showing the, 199; of human scapegoat painted half white, half black, 573
Faces, veiled to avert evil influences, 200; blackened, 213, 462
Faditras among the Malagasy, 541
Fairies, averse to iron, 226
Falling sickness transferred to fowls, 545; mistletoe a remedy for, 662
Fan tribe, the, 85
Fans of the Gaboon, 684; of West Africa, 495
Fans in homoeopathic magic, 26
Fasting obligatory, 23, 26; of Catholics, 488; of girls at puberty, 600, 601
Father, called after his child, 247; and mother, names not to be mentioned, 250; of a god, 333, 334
Father-in-law, his name not to be mentioned, 249-51
Father May, 126, 127
Fatigue transferred to leaves, 540
Fauns, rustic Italian gods, 464
Fazoql, kings of, 266
Feast of All Souls, 633; of yams, 200
Feet of enemies eaten, 498

Felkin, Dr. R. W., 534
Feloupes of Senegambia, 74
Female kinship or mother-kin defined, 152; indifference to paternity of kings under, 154; at Athens, 155; among the Aryans, 155
Fern-seed, 704, 705
Fernando Po, taboos observed by the kings of, 172, 238
Fertilisation, artificial, 114, 378, 580, 582; of barren women, 581
Fertility, Diana as a goddess of, 8; of women, magical images designed to ensure the, 14
Fetish kings in West Africa, 177
Feuillet, Madame Octave, 306
Fever, cures for, 343-5
Fig, artificial fertilisation of the, 378; human scapegoat beaten with branches of the wild, 579
Fig-tree, the sacred, 136; artificial fertilisation of the, 580, 582
Fiji Islands, the, conception of the soul in, 179; notion of the absence of the soul in dreams in, 182; catching away souls in, 187; supposed effect of using chief's dishes or clothes in, 202; custom at cutting a chief's hair in, 233; birth-trees in, 682; drama of death and resurrection in, 695
Finland, cattle protected by the woodland spirits in, 141
Finnish-Ugrian peoples, sacred groves of the, 111
Finnish wizards and witches, 81
Finns, 521
Fire, the god of, 23; kept burning for the sake of absent warriors, 26; supposed to be subject to Catholic priests, 53; used to stop rain, 64; as a charm to rekindle the sun, 78; and Water, kings of, 108, 176, 266; kindled by friction, 161, 534, 617, 618, 620, 627, 639, 644, 707; purification by, 197, 198, 213, 648; "new," 485, 614; sacred, 486, 534; "living," 638; "wild," 638; made by means of a wheel, 639; of heaven, 644; extinguished by mistletoe, 659, 662, 706; primitive ideas as to the origin of, 707. *See also* Bonfires, Fires, Need-fire.
Fire-festivals of Europe, the, 609; interpretation of, 641; solar theory of, 642, 643; purificatory theory of, 642, 647; at the solstices, 643; a protection against witchcraft, 648; their relation to Druidism, 654
Fires, perpetual, 3, 161, 163, 665, 704; the Lenten, 609; Easter, 614; Beltane, 617; Midsummer, 622; Hallowe'en, 632, 635; Midwinter, 636; extinguished before lighting the need-fire, 639; burning of effigies in the, 650; burning of men and women in the, 652; the solstitial, perhaps sun-charms, 706
First-fruits, 170, 177, 396, 431, 467, 479, 482, 487
Fish, magical image to procure, 18; sacred, 473; treated with respect by fishing tribes, 527; external soul in a golden, 676
Fishers tabooed, 216
Fishing, homoeopathic magic in, 18
Flamen Dialis, the, 151, 235, 244; rules of life prescribed for, 174
Flaminica, the, 151; rules observed by, 174
Flanders, Midsummer fires in, 630, 646; the Yule log in, 637
Flax, homoeopathic magic at sowing, 28; prayers of old Prussians for the growth of, 288; giddiness transferred to, 545; leaping over bonfires to make it grow tall, 613, 624, 626
Flax-mother, 399
Flight of the king, at Rome, 157
Flowers, goddess of, 588
Flute, magical, made from human leg-bone, 30; skill of Marsyas on the, 354
Folk-customs, the external soul in, 678-701
Folk-tales, the external soul in, 667-78
Food, homoeopathic magic for supply of, 17; eaten dry, 21, 29, 68; tabooed, 21, 22, 238; taboos on leaving food over, 200
Fools, Bishop of, 586
Footprints, contagious magic of, 44, 45
Foreskins used in rain-making, 65
Fowler, W. Warde, 709
Foxes, burnt in Midsummer fires, 656, 657; witches turn into, 657
Framin in West Africa, dance of women at, 26
France, contagious magic in, 44; peasants ascribe magical powers to priests, 53, 54; images of saints dipped in water as a rain-charm in, 77; kings of, touch for scrofula, 90; custom of the Harvest-May in, 118; May customs in, 121; the May-pole in, 124; harvest customs in, 341, 448-50, 453, 455, 457-9; the Corn-mother in, 401; the dough man in, 480; hunting the wren in, 537; the King of the Bean in, 586; expulsion of witches in, 561; Lenten fires in, 610; Midsummer fires in, 628-30, 645; the Yule log in, 637; wicker-work giants burnt in, 655; mistletoe in, 662; birth-trees in, 682
Franche-Comté, dances in, to make hemp grow, 28; the goat at threshing in, 456
Frey, the Scandinavian god of fertility, 143
Fricktal, Switzerland, the Whitsuntide Lout in, 128; the Whitsuntide Basket in, 129
Friction, fire kindled by. *See under* Fire
Friesland, East, the clucking hen at threshing in, 451
Frigg, the Norse goddess, and Balder, 607
Frog in magic, 31, 73, 131; maladies transferred to frogs, 544
Frog-flayer, the, in Whitsuntide pageant, 130
Frosinone in Latium, burning an effigy of the Carnival at, 302
Fruit-trees, fertilised by fruitful women, 28; homoeopathic magic in relation to, 29; threatened to make them bear fruit, 113; worshippers of Osiris forbidden to injure, 380; wrapt in straw as a precaution against evil spirits, 561; fires lit under, 632; fumigated with smoke of need-fire, 641; fertilised by burning torches, 647
Fuegian charm to make the wind drop, 80

Fumigation, with laurel, 95; of flocks, 478; with juniper and rue, 560; of fruit-trees and nets, 641; of crops, 645
Funeral customs, 185, 190, 227, 542; rites, 367, 375

Gaboon, theory of the external soul in the, 684
Gabriel, the archangel, 13, 241
Galela, dread of menstruous women in, 604
Galelareese of Halmahera, 19, 29-31
Galicia, harvest customs in, 451
Gallas, 98, 118; kings of the, 10
Galli, the emasculated priests of Attis, 348
Gamesa, the image of, 482
Gardens of Adonis, 341-7
Garos of Assam, 72, 568
Gascon peasants, their belief in the magical power of priests, 54
Gatschet, A. S., 255
Gaul, ancient, human sacrifices in, 653; the mistletoe in, 659
Gauri, harvest goddess, 420
Gayos of Sumatra, 141
Gazelle Peninsula, 251; the Ingniet society in the, 680
Geomancy in China, 36
Germany, contagious magic in, 39, 42, 45; worship of women in ancient, 97; tree-worship in, 110; Harvest-May in, 118; use of May trees in, 119; Midsummer trees in, 122; races at Whitsuntide in, 124; worship of the oak in, 160; belief as to the escape of the soul in, 182; superstition as to cut hair in, 234; the Corn-mother in, 399; the Old Woman in, 400; names given to the last sheaf in, 401; harvest customs, 402, 408, 427, 449, 451, 453, 454, 458-60; the Corn-spirit in, 448; the harvest cock in, 451, 479; pigs' bones in connection with sowing in, 461; Lenten fires in, 612; Easter fires in, 614; Midsummer fires in, 623; the Yule log in, 637; need-fire in, 641; mistletoe in, 662, 702; oak-wood for cottage fires at Midsummer in, 665; stories of the external soul in, 672; birth-trees in, 682
Gerontocracy in Australia, 83
Getae, human god among the, 97
Ghansyam Deo, a deity of the Gonds, 571
Ghosts, 84, 185, 190, 207, 216, 226, 253, 491, 551; of the slain, 212-15, 227; of animals, dread of, 223, 520-24, 526
Giant who had no heart in his body, stories of the, 668, 673; mythical, supposed to kill and resuscitate lads at initiation, 695
Giants, wicker-work, 654, 655
Giddiness, cure for, 545
Gilyaks of the Amoor, 510-14, 517, 530
Gingiro, king of, 270
Gippsland blacks, 248
Girl, annually sacrificed to cedar tree, 112; sacrificed to a crocodile, 145; sacrificed for the crops, 432; and boy, need-fire kindled by, 640
Girls, married to nets, 144; used in rain-making, 210; seclusion of, at puberty, 595-607
Glory, the Hand of, 30
Gnabaia, an Australian spirit, 693
Goajiros of Colombia, 252
Goat, blood of, sucked by priest as means of inspiration, 94; sacrificed, 356, 391, 436; in relation to Dionysus, 390, 464; corn-spirit as, 454; last sheaf in form of a, 454; killed on harvest-field, 455; effigy of a, 456; sacred animal of a Bushman tribe, 474; relation of, to Athena, 477; evils transferred to, 540; as scapegoat, 565
God, savage ideas of, 92; the killing and resurrection of a, 301, 538; the Dying and Reviving, 386; killed in animal form, 391; the animal enemy of, originally identical with the god, 391, 469, 475; eating the, 479-94, 498; dying, as scapegoat, 539, 576; killing of the, in Mexico, 587-92. *See also* Gods
God-man, a source of danger, 202
Goddesses, of fertility served by eunuch priests, 349; personated by women, 589
Gods, appeal to the pity of, as a rain-charm, 75; incarnate human, 91-106, 162; conception of, slowly evolved, 91; and goddesses, dramatic weddings of, 140; the marriage of the, 142-5; created by men in their own likeness, 260; their names tabooed, 260-62; mortality of the, 264-5; death and resurrection of, 385-6, 388; distinguished from spirits, 411
Gold Coast, negroes of the, 118; expulsion of demons on the, 550, 554, 555
Golden Bough, 3, 593, 701-11
—— Fleece, ram with, 290
Goldi, bear-festivals of the, 514
Goliath, straw man stabbed at Whitsuntide, 133
Gonds of India, the, 433, 571
Good Friday, ceremony in Greek churches on, 345; expulsion of witches on, 560
Gorillas, lives of persons bound up with those of, 685
Gossips of St. John, 344
Gouri, Indian goddess of fertility, 343
Gout, remedy for, 196; transferred to trees, 546
Gran Chaco, Indians of, 182, 601
Granada, youthful rulers secluded in, 595
Grandmother, name given to last sheaf, 401
Grannas-mias, torches, 611
Grannus, a Celtic deity, 611
Grass king, the, 130, 299
Grass knotted as a charm, 242
Grasshoppers, in homoeopathic magic, 37; sacrifice of, 541
Grave, soul fetched from, 185; of Zeus, 265; of Dionysus, 265, 389; of Osiris, 365, 378; dance at initiation in a, 693
Grave-clothes, homoeopathic magic of, in China, 35; no buttons in, 243
Graves, rain-charms at, 67, 71; trees planted on, 115
Greasing the weapon instead of wound, 41
Great Mother, last sheaf called, 401
Grebo people of Sierra Leone, 174

Greece, priestly kings in, 9; ceremony performed by persons supposed to have been dead, 15; homoeopathic magic in, 16, 34; sacrifice of pregnant victims to ensure fertility in, 28; contagious magic in, 44; rain-making in, 69, 77; sanctity of kings and chiefs in Homeric, 89; forests of, 110; tree worship in, 111; custom as to foundations of new buildings in, 191; custom as to man-slayers in, 216; names of the priests of the Eleusinian mysteries not to be mentioned in, 259; the eight years' cycle in, 279; human sacrifices in, 290; mode of ridding the fields of mice in, 530; scapegoats in, 541, 578; Midsummer fires in, 631; stories of the external soul in, 670
Greek belief that the sun rode in a chariot, 79; calendar, 279; charms, 31, 32; Church, ceremonies on Good Friday in the, 345; divinities who died and rose again, 386; maxim not to look at one's reflection in water, 192; maxim not to wear rings, 243; mythology, Adonis in, 325, 327; ritual of expiatory sacrifices, 473; sanctuaries, iron not to be brought into, 224; superstitions as to certain woolen garments and stones, 32
Green Corn Dance, 486
—— George, 126, 128
—— Wolf, Brotherhood of the, 628, 664
Greenland, woman in child-bed thought to control the wind in, 80; belief in the mortality of the gods in, 264
Grey, Sir George, 689
Grimm, Jacob, 709
Grove, Arician, 5, 163, 301; Balder's, 608; soul of the chief in a sacred, 681
Groves, sacred, 110, 111; to Diana, 140
Guanches of Teneriffe, 75
Guarani Indians, 29, 601
Guatemala, the Indians of, 687
Guayaquil, Indians of, 431
Guaycurus, the, 82
Guayquiries of the Orinoco, 605
Guiana, Indians of, 181, 601
Guinea, priestly kings in, 169; belief of negroes in dreams, 182; human sacrifices in, 433; annual sacrifice of oxen at Great Bassam, 467; expulsion of the devil in, 554; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 597
Gunputty, elephant-headed god, 100
Gypsies, Green George among the, 126; annual ceremony performed by the, 568

Hag (*wrach*), name given to the last corn cut in Wales, 403, 404
Haida Indians, 27, 35
Hair, used in magic, 13, 233-5; charms, 28, 29, 32; tabooed, 231; disposal of cut, 233; external soul in, 670; strength bound up with, 680; of criminals, wizards, and witches shorn, 681
Hair-cutting, ceremonies at, 233
Halfdan the Black, Norwegian king, 379
Hallowe'en, 609; fires, 632-6; divinations at, 634; witches, fairies, and hobgoblins let loose at, 634; and Beltane, the two chief fire festivals of the British Celts, 656
Halmahera, driving away devils in, 548
Hand of Glory, 30
Hands, tabooed, 204-6, 208, 210, 212, 214, 233; not to be clasped, 240; of enemies eaten, 498
Hannibal, his retirement from Italy, 348
Hanover, harvest customs in, 400, 401, 454; Easter bonfires in, 615
Hare, corn-spirit as, 452
Hares not eaten lest they make the eaters timid, 495; witches changed into, 657
Haroekoe, East Indian island, fisherman's magic in, 18
Harpocrates, the younger Horus, 364
Harran, mourning for Tammuz in, 338; legend of Tammuz in, 442 human sacrifices in, 444
Harvest, rain-charm at, 341; custom of the Arabs of Moab at, 372, 378; expulsion of devils after, 557, 575
Harvest child, 406; cock, 451; customs, 400-10; goat, 454; hen, 451; May, 118, 124; mother, 401
Harz Mountains, 42; Carnival in the, 307
Hawaii, capture of souls by sorcerers in, 188; festival of Macahity in, 282, 283
Hawk, Isis in the form of a, 364
Hawks revered by the Ainos, 516
Hawthorn at doors on May Day, 121
Hays of Errol, 702
Head, prohibition to touch the, 207, 230, 231; regarded as sacred, 230; tabooed, 230-31; supposed to be the residence of spirits, 230; of horse in Roman sacrifice, 478. *See also* Heads
Head-hunters, 433
Headache, caused by clipped hair, 234, 237; transferred to animal, 540
Heads, of lac gatherers not to be cleansed, 21; of man-slayers shaved, 215; of dead kings removed and kept, 295. *See also* Head
Heart, of Dionysus, 388, 389; of jackal not eaten lest it make the eater timid, 495; of lion or leopard eaten, 495; of water-ouzel eaten to acquire wisdom and eloquence, 496; of wolf and of bear eaten to acquire courage, 496
Hearts, of men and animals offered to the sun, 79, 589; of dead kings eaten by their successors, 295; of men sacrificed, 431; of men eaten to acquire their qualities, 497
Heaven, between, and earth, 592-607; fire of, 644; Queen of, 711
Hebrew prophets, their ethical religion, 51
Heitsi-eibib, Hottentot god or hero, 264
Helen of the Tree, 356
Heliogabalus, sun-god at Emesa, 330
Helle and Phrixus, children of King Athamas, 290
Hemp, promoting the growth of, 28, 624
Hen, sacrificed by woodman after felling tree, 112; heart of, not eaten, 495
Hera, adoption of Hercules by, 14; and Zeus, their marriage, 143
Hercules, 14, 425, 443
Hercynian forest, 109
Herdsmen dread witches and wolves, 649
Hermotimus of Clazomenae, 185
Hermutrude, legendary queen of Scotland, 155

Hialto, how he became brave, 496
Hidatsa Indians, 111, 690
Highlands of Scotland, the, magic to catch fish in, 18; St. Bride's Day in, 134; iron as a charm against fairies in, 226; saying about combing hair at night in, 234; knots untied at marriage in, 241; beating the cow's hide in, 538; Beltane fires in, 617-20; Hallowe'en fires in, 635; need-fire in, 641; story of the external soul in, 673
Hilaria, festival of joy, 350
Hindoo charm, 30; marriage, 34; trinity, 52; superstition, 114
Hindoo Koosh, sacred cedar of the, 95; expulsion of demons in the, 557, 575
Hindoos, 15, 101, 180, 343, 602, 669; of Southern India, 482
Hippasus, torn to pieces by Bacchanals, 292
Hippodamia and Pelops, 156
Hippolytus, 4, 5, 301, 477
Hippopotamus, ceremony after killing a, 523
Hogmanay, Highland custom on, 538; song in the Isle of Man, 634
Holiness, and pollution not differentiated by savages, 222; conceived as a dangerous virus, 474; as a dangerous physical substance which needs to be insulated, 594
Holland, "killing the Hare" in, 452; Easter fires in, 617; the mistletoe in, 662
Honduras, Indians of, 687
Honey-wine, continence at brewing, 219
Hooks used in magic, 27; to catch souls, 180, 185
Horns, blown to ban witches, 561; to expel demons, 568
Horse, prohibition to see a, 172; prohibition to ride, 174; last sheaf given to, 408, 460; corn-spirit as a, 459; "fatigue of the," 460; "Cross of the," 460; Virbius and the, 476; sacrificed to Mars, 478, 578; red, sacrificed as a purification of the land, 570
Horse-headed Demeter, 471
Horses, Hippolytus killed by, 5, 301; excluded from Arician grove, 5, 477; sacrificed to the sun, 79; driven through the need-fire, 639, 640
Horus, his eye injured by Typhon, 475; the younger, son of Isis and the dead Osiris, 364, 367
Hos, of North-eastern India, 556; of Togoland, 232, 239, 241, 555
Hother, the blind god, and Balder, 608
Hottentots, 45, 80, 221, 265
House, taboos observed after building a new, 117; ceremony on entering a new, 186; taboos on quitting the, 200
House-building, 30; continence observed at, 220
Housebreakers, charms employed by, 30
Howitt, A. W., 44, 234
Hudson Bay Territory, 605
Huichol Indians of Mexico, 23, 32
Huitzilopochtli, or Vitzilipuztli, a great Mexican god, 488
Human sacrifices. *See under* Sacrifices
Hungary, Whitsuntide Queen in, 131; continence at sowing in, 138; harvest cock in, 451; custom at threshing in, 458; women fertilised by being struck with certain sticks in, 581; Midsummer fires in, 627, 644
Hunters, employ homoeopathic magic to ensure a catch, 18; taboos observed by and for, 19, 20, 23; employ contagious magic of footprints, 45; tabooed, 216; chastity of, 217; propitiation of wild animals by, 518-32; luck of, spoiled by menstruous women, 605-6
Hurons, 144, 179, 527, 550
Husband, taboos observed in his absence, 21-25; his name not to be pronounced, 248, 249; and wife, name given to two fire-sticks, 484
Huzuls of the Carpathians, 20, 234, 541, 638
Hyaenas, supposed power over men's shadows, 190
Hymn to Demeter, Homeric, 393
Hymns to Demetrius Poliorcetes, 97; to Tammuz, 326
Hyrrockin, a giantess, 608

Ibadan, king of, 295
Ibans of Sarawak, 531
Ibn Batutah, 145
Ibos of the lower Niger, 685
Iddah, divinity claimed by king of, 99
Ignorrotes, the, 115
Ijebu tribe, 281
Ilocanes of Luzon, the, 113
Images, magical, 13, 14; dipped in water as a rain-charm, 77; of Osiris made of vegetable mould, 374-7; vicarious use of, 492; of gods, suggested origin of, 501; demons conjured into, 563, 568; colossal, filled with human victims and burnt, 654
Imagination, death from, 204
Immortality, Egyptian hope of, centred in Osiris, 367, 376, 382; hope of, associated with the Eleusinian mysteries, 398
Impregnation of women by the sun, 603
Inca, fast of the future, 595
Incarnation, of gods in human form, 91; examples of temporary, 93; of divine spirit in Shilluk kings, 267, 268
Incas of Peru, 40, 104, 236, 553
Incense, inhaled to produce inspiration, 95; used in exorcism, 195; burnt at the rites of Adonis, 337; burnt in honour of the Queen of Heaven, 337; burnt as a protection against witches, 561
Incest, 141, 332
India, ascendency of sorcerers over gods in modern, 52; rain-charm in, 71; incarnate human gods in, 93, 100; ceremony of rebirth in, 197; story of the transference of human souls in, 184; images of Siva and Pârvatî married in, 319-20; human sacrifices in, 433; use of animals as scapegoats in, 565; girls secluded at puberty in, 602; torture of suspected witches in, 681
——, ancient, ceremony performed by persons supposed to have been dead in, 15; magical nature of ritual in, 53; magical power of kings in, 89; maxim not to look at one's reflection in water in, 192

India, Central Provinces of, rain-charms in, 73; sacred trees in, 119; peacock worshipped among the Bhils of, 474; expulsion of disease in, 565
——, North-eastern, harvest home festival in, 556
——, Northern, the *Emblica officinalis* sacred in, 119; coco-nuts sacred in, 119; eyes of owl eaten in, 497
——, South-eastern, precautions against demon of smallpox in, 549
——, Southern, inspired priest in, 94; husband's name tabooed in, 249; kings formerly killed after a twelve years' reign in, 274; ceremonies at eating the new rice in, 482; expulsion of demon in, 563
Indian ceremonies analogous to the rites of Adonis, 336; legend parallel to Balder myth, 701
—— Archipelago, the, head-hunting in, 441; expulsion of diseases in, 566; birth-custom in, 679
Indonesian ideas of the rice soul, 414; treatment of the growing rice as a breeding woman, 414
Indra, great Indian god, 67, 701
Industrial progress essential to intellectual progress, 48; evolution from uniformity to diversity of function, 106
Infanticide, 293
Infants, exposed to attacks of demons, 226, 245; tabooed, 231
Infidelity of wife thought to injure absent husband, 23, 25
Ingiald, son of King Aunund, 496
Ingniet or Ingiet, a secret society, 680
Initiation, rites of, 692, 693
Innovations, the savage distrust of, 225
Ino and Melicertes, 290, 291
Inquisition, the, 101, 102
Insects, homoeopathic magic of, 31; charms to protect the fields against, 530, 531
Inspiration, 93; two modes of producing temporary, 94; prophetic, 334; savage theory of, 356
Intellectual progress dependent on economic progress, 48
Invulnerability, conferred by decoction of a parasitic orchid, 660; of Balder, 667; attained through blood brotherhood with animal, 684
Invulnerable warlock or giant, stories of the, 668
Ireland, woman burnt as a witch in, 56; magical powers of kings in, 89; belief as to green boughs on May Day in, 119; May Day in, 121; May Queen in, 131; taboos observed by kings in ancient, 173; cut hair preserved against the day of judgment in, 236; old kings of, might not have any blemish, 273; harvest customs in, 404; hunting the wren in, 537; Beltane fires in, 621; Hallowe'en in, 634; Midsummer fires in, 646; story of the external soul in, 673
Iron, tabooed, 221, 224; used as a charm against spirits, 225, 481; mistletoe gathered without the use of, 660
Iron-Beard, Dr., a Whitsuntide mummer, 297, 300, 307
Iroquois, the, 112, 553
Ishtar, great Babylonian goddess, 325, 330
Isis, how she discovered the name of Ra, 260; sister and wife of Osiris, 363, 382; her many names, 382; a corn-goddess, 382; her discovery of wheat and barley, 382; identified with Demeter, 383; popularity of her worship in the Roman Empire, 383; resemblance to the Virgin Mary, 383; dirge of, 424
Islay, the island of, 403
Isle de France, the May-tree and Father May in, 126; harvest customs in, 427, 430; Midsummer giant burnt in, 655
Isle of Man, the, 81; St. Bridget in, 135; hunting the wren in, 536; Midsummer fires in, 630, 645; old New Year's Day in, 633; Hogmanay song in, 634; Hallowe'en in, 636
Israelites, 210, 472
Issapoo, negroes of, 501
Italones, the, 498
Italy, disposal of loose hair by women in, 236; "killing the Hare" at harvest in, 453; resemblance between the Carnival of modern and the Saturnalia of ancient, 586; Midsummer fires in, 631; the mistletoe in, 659; birth-trees in, 682
——, ancient, spinning on highroads forbidden to women, 20; forests of, 110; tree-worship in, 111; oaks sacred to Jupiter in, 160
Itonamas of South America, 180
Ivy, eaten by Bacchanals, 95; prohibition to touch or name, 174; sacred to Attis, 352; sacred to Osiris, 381; associated with Dionysus, 387

Ja-Luo tribes of Kavirondo, 215
Jablonski, P. E., 384
Jabme-Aimo, abode of the dead, 529
Jack-in-the-Green, 129, 299
Jackal's heart not eaten lest it make the eater timid, 495
Jagas, a tribe of Angola, 293
Jambi in Sumatra, temporary kings in, 287
Jana, another form of Diana, 164-5
Janus, 164, 165, 167; as a god of doors, 166; explanation of the two-headed, 166
Japan, black dog sacrificed for rain in the mountains of, 73; rain-making by means of a stone in, 76; ceremony to make trees bear fruit in, 114; the Mikado of, 168; bear festival of the Aino in, 505; the mistletoe in, 660
Jar, the evils of a whole year shut up in a, 567
Jars, wind kept by priests in, 170
Jaundice, 15, 16
Java, 30; rain-charms in, 66, 68, 72; sexual intercourse to promote the growth of rice in, 136; custom when child is first set on the ground, 181; remedy for gout or rheumatism in, 196; superstitions as to the head in, 230; ceremony at rice-harvest in, 418; earthworms eaten by dancing girls in, 496
Jawbones, magical use of, 18, 78; of slain animals propitiated by hunters, 526
Jaws of corpse tied up to prevent the escape of the soul, 180

Jay, blue, as scapegoat, 545
Jeoud, sacrificed by his father, 293
Jerome on the worship of Adonis, 346
—— of Prague, 118
Jerusalem, the Temple at, 225; mourning for Tammuz at, 326; religious music at, 334
Jewish hunters, 228
Jewitt, John R., 698
Jews, attitude of, to the pig, 472; their ablutions, 473; use of scapegoats, 569, 572
Jinn, 145, 540
Jinnee of the sea, virgins married to a, 146
Judah, idolatrous kings of, 79
Judas, effigies of, burnt, 615, 616
Jukos, the, of Nigeria, 270
Julian, the Emperor, 109, 336, 346
Juniper berries, houses fumigated with, 560
Juno, 150, 151, 164, 165; Moneta, 150
Jupiter, Roman kings in the character of, 148, 152; as god of the oak, the rain, and the thunder, 160; and Juno, doubles of Janus (Dianus) and Diana, 164; and Dionysus, 388
—— Capitoline, 148, 150; Elicius, 149; Latian, 150; Liber, temple of, 225
Jutland, superstitions about a parasitic rowan in, 702
Juturna, a water nymph, 165

Kabyle story of the external soul, 674
Kachins of Burma, 219
Kadiak, island off Alaska, 208
Kai, tribe in New Guinea, 498, 581, 694
Kaian association in Ceram, 696
Kalamba, a Congo chief, 198
Kali, Indian goddess, 94
Kalmucks, the, 534; story of the external soul among the, 675
Kamilaroi, the, 498
Kamtchatkans, the, 78, 520, 529
Kangaroo, eaten to make eater swift-footed, 496
Kansas Indians, 496
Kapus or Reddis in Madras Presidency, 73
Kara-Kirghiz, the, 120
Karens of Burma, 183, 185, 230, 415
Karma-tree, ceremony over a, 342
Karo-Bataks of Sumatra, 40, 185, 233
Karok Indians of California, 528
Karpathos, island of, 545
Katajalina, an Australian spirit, 693
Kavirondo, tribes of, purification of man-slayers among the, 215
Kayans of Borneo, 82, 117, 211, 221, 414, 496
Kei Islands, the, magical telepathy in, 24, 26; treatment of the navel-string in, 40; expulsion of demons in, 548; birth custom in, 679
Kekchi Indians of Guatemala, 138
Keramin tribe of New South Wales, 76
Keremet, a god of the Wotyaks, 144
Kettles used to mimic thunder, 77
Key of the field, 430
Keys, bunch of, as a charm, 226
Khalîj, old canal at Cairo, 370
Khan, ceremony at visiting a Tartar, 198; the Great, 228
Khŏn-ma, Tibetan goddess, 492
Khonds, the, 256, 434, 557
Khor-Adar Dinka, the, 270
Kibanga, king of, 270
Kickapoo Indians, 214
Kid, surname of Dionysus, 390
Kidneys tabooed to Malagasy soldiers, 22
Killer, of the Elephant, official who throttles sick kings, 271; of the Rye-woman, 428
Killing the spirit of the wind, 82; the divine king, 264-83; the tree-spirit, 296-323; the divine animal, 499-518; a god, 533, 538, 587-92
Kimbunda, the, of West Africa, 498
King, the killing of the divine, 264-83; his life sympathetically bound up with the prosperity of the country, 267, 268, 592; sacrifice of his son, 289-93; responsible for weather and crops, 292. *See also* Kings
King and Queen, at Athens, 9; at Whitsuntide, 132, 299; of May, 132, 299, 320
King, the Grass, 130, 299; the Leaf, 130; the Roman, as Jupiter, 148
King of the Bean, 586; of the Calf, 458; of Fire, 108, 176, 266; of Rain, 70; of Rain and Storm, 107; of Sacred Rites at Rome, 9, 106, 152, 157; of Water, 108, 176, 266; of the Wood at Nemi, 1, 3, 8, 106, 140, 147, 163, 164, 167, 269, 296, 300, 301, 586, 593, 703, 710; of the Years at Lhassa, 573, 574
King Hop in Siam, 284, 285
King's evil, 90, 204
—— Race at Whitsuntide, 129
Kings, priestly, 9, 169, 203; Teutonic, 9; magicians as, 83-91; touch for scrofula, 90; divinity of, 91; as gods in India, 100; temples built in honour of, 104; sacrifices to, 104; of nature, 106-9; of rain, 108; of fire and water, 108; Roman, 147-9, 151, 152; supernatural powers attributed to, 149, 168; paternity of, 154; their lives regulated by strict rules, 168, 194; taboos observed by, 171; beaten before coronation, 176; portraits of, not on coins, 193; guarded against the magic of strangers, 198; not to be seen eating and drinking, 198; forbidden to leave their palaces, 200; tabooed, 202; foods tabooed to, 238; names of, tabooed, 257-9; killed when strength fails, 265; attacks on, permitted, 267, 275; worshipped after death, 268; killed at the end of a fixed term, 274; dying by deputy, 278; temporary, 283-9; torn in pieces, traditions of, 378; trace of the custom of slaying them annually, 440
Kingship, evolution of the sacred, 105; descent of the, in the female line, 152, 154, 155; burdens and restrictions attaching to the early, 168, 175; tenure of the, 279-81
Kingsley, Miss, on soul-traps, 188
Kinship of men with crocodiles, 519
Kiowa Indians, 253
Kirghiz, the, 156, 249, 602
Kirn, last corn cut, 406, 407
Kiwai, natives of, 379
Klamath Indians of Oregon, 255
Knife as charm against spirits, 226 not to be left edge upwards, 227

Knives, not used at meals after a funeral, 227; of special pattern used in reaping rice, 414
Knots, tying up the wind in, 81; prohibition to wear, 174; untied at childbirth, 238, 240; thought to prevent the consummation of marriage, 240; thought to cause sickness and disease, 241; used to cure disease, win a lover, or stop a runaway, 242; magical virtue of, 242-3; tied in branches of trees as remedies, 545
Koniags of Alaska, 600
Koran, on magical knots, 241
Kore, Maiden, title of Persephone, 420
Kore, expelled on Easter Eve in Albania, 560
Koryaks, the, 156, 521, 523
Koschei the Deathless, story of, 671
Kostroma, funeral of, in Russia, 318
Kostrubonko, death and resurrection of, 317
Koui hunters in Laos, 529
Krishna, Hindoo god, 101
Kublai Khan, 228
Kuhn, Adalbert, 644
Kukulu, priestly king, 169
Kumis of South-eastern India, 549
Kunama, the, 107
Kupalo, mythical being, 317-18, 627, 652
Kurmis of India, 565
Kurnai of Victoria, 190, 689
Kuruvikkarans of Southern India, 94
Kwakiutl Indians, 66, 527, 678

Labyrinth, the Cretan, 280
Lac, taboos observed in gathering, 21
Lada, mythical being in Russia, 318
Ladder, for the use of a tree-spirit, 116; to facilitate the descent of the sun, 136
Lafitau, J. F., 256
Lagos, in West Africa, 295, 433
Lagrange, Father, 338
Lake-dwellers of Europe, 399
Lakor, island of, 566
Laluba, the, of the Upper Nile, 85
Lama of Tibet, the Grand, 102-3
Lamb, blood of, tasted by priestess to procure inspiration, 94; as expiatory victim, 224; thrown into lake as an offering, 390; killed sacramentally, 534
Laments for Tammuz, 326; for Osiris, 366
Lamps, dedication of, 3; to light ghosts to their old homes, 374
Landen, the battlefield of, 340
Language, special, 99; change of, caused by taboo, 254, 255, 257
Lanquineros, the, 138
Laos, in Siam, taboos observed at, 21, 23, 219, 594
Lapis manalis used in rain-making ceremony at Rome, 78
Lappland, tying up the wind in, 81
Lapps, the, 221, 238, 243, 256, 521, 529, 606
Latin League, the, 150, 167
Latinus, King, 149
Latium, ancient, the woods of, 150; succession to the kingdom in, 152-8
Latukas of the Upper Nile, 85, 87, 229
Laurel, 95, 148
Laws of Manu, 89, 100
Le Mole, on the Lake of Nemi, 4
Leaf Man, the Little, 128; King, 130
Leaping, to make crops grow high, 28; over bonfires, 560, 610, 613, 621, 624-6, 630, 631, 646, 656
Learchus, son of King Athamas, 290, 291
Leaves, disease transferred to, 539; fatigue transferred to, 540; used to expel demons, 567
Lechrain, 646; burying the Carnival in, 307
Legs not to be crossed, 239, 240
Leinster, taboos observed by the ancient kings of, 173
Lemon, external souls of ogres in a, 669
Lendu tribe of Central Africa, 85
Lengua Indians, the, 82, 88, 253, 294, 526
Lent, personification of, 304
Lenten fires, 609
Leo the Great, 359
Leopard's blood drunk or heart eaten to make eater brave, 495
Leopards, 523; external human souls in, 684-6
Lepers sacrificed by the Mexicans, 444
Leprosy, 473
Lerida in Catalonia, funeral of the Carnival at, 304
Lerotse leaves used in purification, 484
Leti, island of, marriage of the Sun and Earth in, 136; annual expulsion of diseases in, 566
Leto, 120
Letts of Russia, swing to make the flax grow high, 289
Leucadians, 579
Leucippe, daughter of Minyas, 292
Lewis, the island of, 81
Lhota Naga, the, 433
Libyans, the Alitemnian, 156
Licence, periods of, 158, 553, 555, 558, 575, 583
Lightning, magical imitation of, 63; imitation of, by kings, 77, 149; talismans against, 614, 615, 626, 637, 638, 649; regarded as a god descending out of heaven, 708; strikes oak oftener than any other tree, 708, 709; places struck by, enclosed and deemed sacred, 709
Lime-trees, sacred, 161
Linus or Ailinus, Phoenician vintage song, 425, 442
Lion, purification of killer of a, 221; flesh or heart eaten to make eater brave, 495
Lithuania, tree-worship in, 110; sacred groves in, 118; May Day in, 126; last sheaf in, 405; harvest customs in, 406, 428; ceremonies observed at eating the new corn in, 480, 481; Midsummer fires in, 627
Lithuanians, 161, 227, 665
Lityerses, 424-47
Lizard, soul in form of, 182; or snake, in ceremony for riddance of evils, 568
Ljeschie, Russian wood-spirits, 465
Llama, black, as scapegoat, 565
Loango, king of, 86, 98, 199-201; taboos observed by kings of, 171; food tabooed to priests in, 238; girls secluded at puberty in, 595

Locks unlocked at childbirth, 238, 239; thought to prevent consummation of marriage, 240; unlocked to facilitate death, 243; mistletoe as a master-key to open all, 663
Locusts, chiefs held responsible for ravages of, 87; superstitious precautions against, 531
Logan, W., 276
Loki and Balder, 608
Lokoiya, the, of the Upper Nile, 85
Lolos of Western China, the, 183
Lombok, island of, 418
Longevity, charms to ensure, 35
"Longevity garments" in China, 36
Loom not to be touched by a man, 211
"Lord of the Heavenly Hosts" in Siam, 284
Lorraine, harvest customs in, 428, 449, 457
Love charms, 44
"Love Chase" among the Kirghiz, 156
Loyalty Islands, recall of a lost soul in the, 185
Lules or Tonocotes of the Gran Chaco, 550
Lusatia, "carrying out Death" in, 310-13
Luxor, paintings at, 142
Lycurgus, king of the Thracian Edonians, 378, 379, 392
Lydia, religious prostitution in, 331; festival of Dionysus in, 390

Ma, goddess at Comana in Pontus, 331
Mabuaig, continence observed during turtle-season, 217; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 598
Macahity, a Hawaiian festival, 282, 283
M'Carthy, Sir Charles, eaten by the Ashantees to make them brave, 497
Macdonald, Rev. James, 18, 680
Macedonian calendar, 443
MacGregor, Sir William, 84
Macpherson, Major S. C., 437
Macusis of British Guiana, 181, 601
Madagascar, king of, as high priest, 9; foods tabooed in, 22; custom of women while men are at war in, 26; magical use of stones in, 33; modes of counteracting evil omens, 37; fear of being photographed in, 193; taboo on mentioning personal names in, 246; names of chiefs and kings tabooed, 258; crocodiles respected in, 519. *See also* Malagasy
Madanassana Bushmen, 474
Madi tribe of Central Africa, 534
Madonna and Isis, their resemblance, 383
Madura, inspired mediums in, 95
Magic, principles of, 11; sympathetic, 10-48, 200, 202, 211, 219, 233, 237, 386, 403, 533; homoeopathic or imitative, 11-37, 63, 221, 239, 240, 341, 444, 494-9, 581, 642, 704; contagious, 11, 37-45, 230, 233, 235; positive and negative, 19, 21, 29; public and private, 45-61; and religion, 48-60, 64, 90, 92, 162, 324; and science, 48, 49, 712; attraction of, 49; the Age of, 55, 56; universality of belief in, 55, 56; fallacy of, 59, 90; movement of thought from magic through religion to science, 711
Magician, public, 45, 60; and priest, 52
Magicians, claim to compel the gods, 52; professional, 61; as kings, 83-91; develop into gods and kings, 92; the oldest professional class in the evolution of society, 105; Egyptian, 52, 261
Magnets thought to keep brothers at unity, 34
Magondi, a Mashona chief, 98
Magyar story of the external soul, 674
Maharajas as incarnations of Krishna, 101
Mahrattas, 100
Mai Darat, a Sakai tribe, 493
Maiden, the (Persephone), the descent of, 371; name given to the last corn cut in the Highlands of Scotland, 403, 409
Maidhdeanbuain, "the shorn maiden," 407
Maidu Indians of California, 707, 708
Maize, goddess of, 28; magic to promote its growth, 28, and increase, 33; personified as an Old Woman who Never Dies, 419; goddess of the young, 588
Maize-mother, the, 412, 413
Makololo, the, of South Africa, 236
Makrizi, Arab historian, 64
Malabar, custom of *Thalavettiparothiam* in, 278; cows as scapegoats in, 570; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 602
Malagasy, 217, 519; *faditras* among the, 541
Malay charms and magic, 13, 19, 28, 80; taboos, 21
Malays, the, 88, 113, 179, 181, 183, 184, 188, 230, 248, 413, 417, 541, 676, 683
Maldive Islands, virgin sacrificed as bride to a jinnee of the sea in the, 146
Mallans of India, 565
Malta, Midsummer fires in, 631; Phoenician temples of, 330; fires on St. John's Eve in, 631
Mamurius Veturius, 577, 580
Man, Isle of. *See* Isle of Man
Man-god, 10, 60, 92, 203, 265
Mandan Indians, 419, 562
Mandelings of Sumatra, the, 116, 239
Maneros, chant of Egyptian reapers, 365, 371, 372, 424
Mangaia, Pacific island, separation of religious and civil authority in, 177
Mangaians, the, 191
Mani of Chitombe or Jumba, 234
Manii at Aricia, many, 491
Manipur, Rajah of, and his human scapegoat, 543
Manius Egerius, 6, 492
Mannhardt, W., 118, 127, 129, 316, 399, 401, 402, 419, 459, 460, 465, 580, 642, 643, 654, 658
Man-slayers tabooed, 212-16
Manu, the Laws of, 89
Maori chiefs, 204, 230, 231, 235, 259
Maoris, 114, 197, 205, 210, 233, 234, 528, 682
Maraves, the, of South Africa, 116
Marcellus of Bordeaux, 16, 17, 544
Mare, corn-spirit as, 459
Marena (Winter or Death) on Midsummer Eve in Russia, 318
Marigolds in magic, 44
Marimos, Bechuana tribe, 433
Marquesans, 180, 231-3

Marquesas or Washington Islands, human gods in the, 96
Marriage, of men and women to trees, 8; treading on a stone at, 33; the pole-star at, 34; of the Sun and Earth, 136, 145; the Sacred, 139-46; of the Gods, 142-5; consummation of, prevented by knots, 240; mock or real, of human victims, 581
Marriott, Fitzgerald, 26
Mars, 577, 578; temple of, 77; the planet, 444; Field of, 478
Mars Silvanus, 578
Marsaba, a devil, 696
Marseilles, human scapegoats at, 578; Midsummer king of the double axe at, 630
Marsh marigold, hoop wreathed with, 121
Marsyas, his musical contest with Apollo, 354; perhaps a double of Attis, 354
Martens, magic to snare, 18
Masai of East Africa, 219, 232, 238
Mashona of South Africa, 98
Masks worn by devil-dancers, 542; at expulsion of demons, 548, 553; by members of a secret Wolf society, 699
Maspero, Sir Gaston, 53
"Mass of the Holy Spirit," 53
Mass of Saint Sécaire, 54
Massagetae sacrifice horses to the sun, 79
Masset, in Queen Charlotte Islands, dances of Haida women at, 27
Matabele, the, 72, 645
Matacos or Mataguayos, the, 601
Matiamvo, a potentate in Angola, 271
Matuana, Zulu chief, 498
May, King of, 129, 130, 299; King and Queen of, 157, 320; Queen of, 129, 131
May Bride, 135, 317, 320; Bridegroom, 133; Lady, in Cambridge, 127; Rose, the Little, 125
—— Day, celebration of, 119-35, 316, 621; "Burning out of the Witches" on, 560; bonfires on, 617-22
May-bushes, 119, 129, 130, 132; -garlands, 121; -poles, 119, 120, 122-4, 132, 479; -trees, 119-21, 123, 124, 297, 299, 311, 314, 614, 651
Mbaya Indians, the, 293
M'Bengas of the Gaboon, 681
Mecca, pilgrims to, 238
Mecklenburg, magic in, 44; locks unlocked at childbirth in, 239; harvest customs in, 430, 449, 454; treatment of the afterbirth in, 682
Medea and Aeson, 496
Medicine bag, at initiation, 698
—— men, 64, 85, 87, 88, 92, 105, 180, 183-7, 484, 520, 679, 693
Melanesia, homoeopathic magic of stones in, 33; contagious magic of wounds in, 41; confusion of magic and religion in, 52; supernatural power of chiefs in, 84; continence while yam vines are being trained in, 138; malignant spirits in, 192; disposal of cut hair and nails in, 235; names of relations by marriage tabooed in, 251; conception of the external soul in, 684
Melanesians, 52, 246
Melicertes, son of King Athamas, 290, 291
Melos, milk-stones in, 34
Memphis, head of Osiris at, 366
Men, evil transferred to, 542; disguised as demons, 562, 563; as scapegoats, 565; divine, as scapegoats, 571, 576; disguised as women, 610
Menedemus, sacrifices to, 224
Menelik, Emperor of Abyssinia, 66
Menstruation, women tabooed at, 207; seclusion of girls at, 595; reasons for secluding women at, 606
Meriahs, human victims sacrificed among the Khonds, 434, 437
Merlin, the wizard, 76
Meroe, Ethiopian kings of, 266
Mesopotamia, artificial fertilisation of the date-palm in, 582
Messiah, pretended, in America, 102
Metsik, a forest-spirit, 315
Mexican kings, their oath, 87, 104; sacraments, 488; temples, 589
Mexicans, the ancient, 79, 380, 432
Mexico, ancient, festival in honour of the goddess of maize, 28; treatment of the navel-string in, 40; human sacrifices in, 380, 431, 432; killing the god in, 587-92
Micah, the prophet, 51
Mice, in magic, 39; eaten by the Jews as a religious rite, 472; superstitious precautions of farmers against, 530, 531
Midsummer, death of the spirit of vegetation celebrated at, 319; bonfire at, called "fire of heaven," 644; procession of giants at, 654; sacred to Balder, 664
Midsummer bonfires, 122, 622. *See also* Midsummer fires
—— Bride and Bridegroom, 133
—— Day, ancient Roman festival of, 153. *See also* St. John's Day
—— Eve, in Sweden, 122; in Russia, 318; trolls and evil spirits abroad on, 625; oak thought to bloom on, 706. *See also* St. John's Eve
—— festival, in Europe, 153, 622; named after St. John, 343; the most important of the year among the primitive Aryans of Europe, 656
—— fires, 622-32; animals burnt in, 655
Midwinter fires, 636
Mikado of Japan, 168, 169, 176, 202, 593, 595
Miklucho-Maclay, Baron, 197
Milk, women's, promoted by milk-stones, 34; of cows, thought to be promoted by green boughs, 119; customs observed when the king of Bunyoro drinks, 199; of pig thought to cause leprosy, 472, 473; omens from boiling, 482; taboos referring to, 488; not to be drunk by menstruous women, 604; stolen by witches from cows, 620, 627, 628, 648
Milk-stones, magical, 34
Milkmen of the Todas sacred or divine, 100; taboos of, 175
Millet, homoeopathic magic of, 29; the deity of, 481
Minangkabauers of Sumatra, 180, 183, 415, 604

Minahassa, inspired priests in, 95; ceremony at house-warming in, 186, 679; names of parents-in-law tabooed in, 250; sowing and plucking the new rice in, 482; dummies to deceive demons in, 492; hair of slain foe used to impart courage in, 498; expulsion of devils in, 548
Minnetaree Indians, 419, 529
Minos, king of Cnossus, 280
Minotaur, the legend of the, 280
Minyas, king of Orchomenus, 291
Miracles, god-man expected to work, 93
Miris of Assam, 496
Mirrors, superstitions as to, 192
Mirzapur, rearing of silkworms in, 218
Miscarriage in childbed, dread of, 209
Misrule, Lord of, 585, 586
Missouri, the cottonwood trees in the valley of, 111
Mistletoe, 160, 658, 659, 701; Balder and the, 608, 658-67, 701, 702, 710; and the Golden Bough, 703-4
Mistress, sanctuary of the, at Lycosura, 243; "of Turquoise," 330
Mithra, Persian deity, 358
Mithraic religion, 467
Mnevis, sacred Egyptian bull, 366, 476
Moab, Arabs of, 32, 378; king of, 293; wilderness of, 334
Mock sun, 79; execution, 283; kings, 284; marriage of human victims, 581
Moffat, Dr. R., 86
Mogk, Professor Eugen, 642
Mohammed bewitched by a Jew, 241
Mohammedan calendar, lunar, 632
Mohammedans, celebration of Midsummer festival by, 632
Moloch, sacrifice of children to, 281
Molonga, a demon of Queensland, 562
Moluccas, the, clove-trees in blossom treated like pregnant women in, 115; fear of offending forest spirits in, 117; abduction of souls in, 186
Mombasa, king of, 99
Mon, island of, 456
Monarchy, in ancient Greece and Rome, 9; rise of, essential to emergence of mankind from savagery, 47
Mondard, the great, 466
Money, magical stones to bring, 33
Mongolia, incarnate human gods in, 103; story of the external soul in, 676
Mongols, 103, 252, 529
Monkey sacrificed for riddance of evils, 569
Montanus the Phrygian, 101
Montezuma, king of Mexico, 104, 593
Moon, the, and Endymion, 4; ceremony at an eclipse of, 78; charm to hasten, 80; Diana conceived as, 141; ceremony at new, 175; human victims sacrificed to, 444; pigs sacrificed to, 472; the "dark," 557; temple of, 571; reflected in Diana's Mirror, 711
Mooraba Gosseyn, a Brahman, 100
Moors of Morocco, 540
Moquis of Arizona, 225, 504
Moravia, "carrying out Death" in, 310, 313; harvest customs in, 408; fires to burn witches in, 622
Mori clan of the Bhils, 474
Morning Star, the, 346; human sacrifice enjoined by, 432
Morocco, iron a protection against demons in, 226; annual temporary king in, 286; homoeopathic magic in, 496; boars used to divert evil spirits in, 540; Midsummer fires in, 631, 632, 646
Moru tribe of Central Africa, 534
Mosyni or Mosynoeci, the, 200
Mota, in the New Hebrides, conception of the external soul in, 684
Mother, of a god, 333; of the gods, 5, 348, 356; the Great (Cybele), 353; of the Maize, 413; of the Rice, 415; or Grandmother of Ghosts, 491-3
Mother-corn, 405; -sheaf, 401
—— Goddess of Western Asia, 330, 331
—— -kin, 152, 248, 332
—— -in-law, savage's dread of his, 190
Motu of New Guinea, 246
Motumotu, the, 81, 192, 246
Mourners, tabooed, 205; change their names, 253
Mouse, soul in form of, 182
Moxos Indians of Bolivia, 23
Mozcas, the, 104
Mukasa, god of the Victoria Nyanza lake, 145
Mukylĕin, the Earth-wife among the Wotyaks, 144
Mullein, used as a charm, 629
Mummers, 126, 127; the Whitsuntide, 296-301; at Hallowe'en in Isle of Man, 633
Mundaris of Assam, 118, 557
Mundas of Bengal, 342
Munster, taboos observed by the ancient kings of, 173
Mura-muras, appealed to for rain, 65
Murderers, taboos imposed on, 216
Murrain, need-fire kindled as a remedy for, 641
Music, as a means of prophetic inspiration, 334; and religion, 334-5
Muysca Indians of Colombia, 104
Muzimbas or Zimbas, the, 97
Myrrh, the mother of Adonis, 337
Mysteries, Eleusinian. *See* Eleusinian mysteries

"Naaman, wounds of the," 336
Nagual, external soul, 687
Nails, used in magic, 44; knocked into trees, 127; used as charms against fairies, 226
Nails, parings of, used in magic, 13, 233; swallowed by attendants, 229; disposal of, 233-7
Namaquas, 495
Names tabooed: personal, 244-8; of relations, 249-51; of the dead, 251-6; of kings and other sacred persons, 257-9; of gods, 260-62
Namuci and Indra, legend of, 702
Nana, mother of Attis, 347
Nandi of East Africa, 214, 235, 247, 372, 483
Nanumea, island of, precautions against strangers in, 195

Narcissus and his reflection, 192
Narrinyeri of South Australia, 201
Natal, the Caffres of, 483
Natchez Indians of North America, 63, 215
Nativity of the Sun at the winter solstice, 358
Nature, conception of the immutable laws of, not primitive, 91-2; the order and uniformity of, 162
Nauras Indians of New Granada, 497
Navajoes of New Mexico, 678
Navel-string, 39-41, 119
Ndembo, secret society on the Lower Congo, 697
Nebseni, the papyrus of, 380
"Neck, crying the," in Devonshire, 445
Need-fire, 617, 638-41
Nekht, the papyrus of, 380
Nemi, 1, 4, 5, 8; priest of Diana at, 1, 8, 106, 161, 167; lake of, 1, 704; sacred grove of, 1, 4, 8, 140-42, 147; at evening, 714
Nephele, wife of King Athamas, 290
Nephthys, sister of Osiris, 363
Net to catch the sun, 79
Nets, marriage of girls to, 144; to catch souls, 182; as amulets, 242; fumigated with smoke of need-fire, 641
New birth, through blood in the rites of Attis, 351; savage theory of, 356; of novices at initiation, 697
New Britain, rain-making in, 63; the Sulka of, 64, 76; magical powers ascribed to chiefs in, 84; avoidance of wife's mother in, 191; expulsion of devils in, 547-8; secret society in, 680
New Caledonia, rain-making by means of a human skeleton in, 71; making sunshine and drought in, 78; detaining the soul in the body in, 180; ideas as to reflections in, 192; burying the evil spirit in, 548; taro plants beaten to make them grow in, 581
New Guinea, charm to hasten the moon in, 80; charm for making wind in, 80; constitution of society in, 84; leavings of food destroyed in, 201; seclusion and purification of man-slayers in, 213; continence observed during the turtle season in, 217; dread of sorcery in, 229
——, British, charms used by hunters in, 18; charm against snake-bite in, 31; no despots in, 84; double chieftainship in the Mekeo district of, 178; a widower an outcast in, 207; changes in language caused by fear of naming the dead in, 255; girls secluded at puberty in, 597
——, Dutch, 213; names of relations by marriage tabooed in, 250
——, Northern, rites of initiation in, 694, 695
——, South-eastern, annual expulsion of demons in, 556
New Hebrides, contagious magic in the, 43; magic of refuse of food in the, 201; conception of the external soul in the, 684
New Ireland, 596
New Mexico, the aridity of, 76; the Indians of, 502, 551
New South Wales, natives of, bury their dead at flood-tide, 35; tribes of, 38; way of stopping rain in, 64; the drama of resurrection at initiation in, 692, 693
New Year, Chinese, 468; the Celtic, on November first, 633
New Year's Day, 558, 569; Eve, 538, 561
New Zealand, sanctity of chiefs in, 204; sacredness of chiefs' blood and heads in, 230, 231; customs at hair-cutting in, 233; magic use of spittle in, 237; names of chiefs tabooed in, 259; effect of contact with a sacred object in, 474; eyes of slain chief swallowed by warriors in, 498; human scapegoats in, 542
Ngarigo tribe of New South Wales, 498
Ngoio, a province of Congo, rule of succession to the chiefship in, 283
Nias, island of, magic in, 18; natives of, believe in demons of trees, 116; conception of the soul in, 179; detaining the soul in the body in, 180; taboos observed by hunters in, 218; superstition as to personal names in, 245; succession to the chieftainship in, 294; expulsion of demons in, 549; story of the external soul in, 677
Nicaragua, the Indians of, 138
Nicholson, General, worshipped as a god, 100
Nicknames, 247
Nicobar Islands, heavy rains attributed to the wrath of spirits in the, 225; custom of mourners in the, 253; changes in language caused by fear of naming the dead, 255; expulsion of demons in the, 567
Niger, belief as to external human souls lodged in animals on the, 686
Nigeria, Northern, custom of putting kings to death in, 271
——, Southern, the priest of the Earth in, 594; theory of the external soul in, 677, 684, 685
Nightingale in magic, 32
Nightjars, the lives of women in, 687
Nile, the rise and fall of the, 369; thought to be swollen by the tears of Isis, 370; the "bride" of the, 370; money and offerings of gold thrown into the, 371
——, the Upper, medicine-men as chiefs among the tribes of, 85; Kings of the Rain on, 107
——, the White, 266, 565
Nine, a number used in magical ceremonies, etc., 18, 241, 242, 284, 480, 618, 620, 625, 626, 628, 639
Niska Indians of British Columbia, 699
Nisus, king of Megara, story of, 670
Noessa Laut, magic in, 18
Nonnus, on death of Dionysus, 388
Noon, fear to lose the shadow at, 191
Nootka Indians, 66, 179, 217, 522, 599, 698; wizard, 18
Normandy, burial of Shrove Tuesday in, 305; harvest customs in, 429; Brotherhood of the Green Wolf in, 628-9; processions on the eve of Twelfth Day in, 647
Norrland, Midsummer bonfires in, 625
Norse stories of the external soul, 673

North-American Indians, 210, 228, 494, 496, 524, 529, 533, 594, 605, 678, 698
Norway, 133; harvest customs in, 428, 429, 453, 454; Midsummer fires in, 625; superstitions about a parasitic rowan in, 702
Nubas of Jebel-Nuba, 203
Nufoors of Dutch New Guinea, 246, 250
Numa, 4, 147, 149, 151, 158, 164
Nut, Egyptian sky-goddess, mother of Osiris, 362, 363
Nuts passed across Midsummer fires, 629
Nyakang, first of the Shilluk kings, 267
Nyanza, Lake, incarnate human god of, 98
Nyassa, Lake, 596

Oak, the worship of the, 159-61, 659, 710; effigy of Death buried under an, 309; the principal sacred tree of the Aryans, 665; human representatives of the oak perhaps originally burnt at the fire-festivals, 665, 666; life of, in mistletoe, 701; supposed to bloom on Midsummer Eve, 706; struck by lightning oftener than any other tree, 708
Oak branch, in rain-charm, 77; crown, sacred to Jupiter and Juno, 148, 151; god, 151, 161; leaves, 148, 661; mistletoe, an "all-healer," 660-62; nymphs, at Rome, 147; -spirit, 701, 703; -trees, sacrifices to, 161, and ague transferred to, 546
—— wood, perpetual fire of, 161, 704; used for the Yule log, 637, 638, 666; used to kindle the Beltane fires, the need-fire, and the Midsummer fires, 618, 620, 639, 665
Oaths, on stones, 33; taken by Mexican kings, 87, 104
Oats Bride, 408; -cow, 457, 458; -goat, 447, 454, 457; -mother, 400; -sow, 460; -stallion, 459; -wolf, 448, 449
O'Brien, Murrogh, 229
Octennial cycle based on an attempt to harmonise lunar and solar time, 279-80
October horse, sacrifice of the, 478
Odin, sacrifice of king's sons to, 278-9, 290; legend of the deposition of, 279; human sacrifices to, 354
O'Donovan, E., 242
Offspring, charms to procure, 14, 15
Ogres in stories of the external soul, 669, 670
Oil, in magic, 23, 25, 26, 76; of St. John, 661, 662, 706; human victim anointed with, 435
Ointment, magical, 41
Ojebway Indians, 13, 45, 78, 113, 211, 245
Olala, secret society of Niska Indians, 699
Old Calabar, 119, 493; expulsion of devils and ghosts in, 567
Old Man, Arab custom of burying the, 378; the last sheaf called the, 402, 426, 427, 467
—— men, savage communities ruled by, 47
—— Rye woman, 428, 465
—— Wife, name given to last corn cut, 403
—— Witch, burning the, 429
—— Woman, of the Corn, 372; last ears of corn called, 400; last sheaf called, 402; killing the, 428; burning the, 614
Old Woman who Never Dies, North American Indian personification of maize, 419
Oldenberg, Professor, 67
Oldfield, A., 251
Olese, the, at Orchomenus, 291, 292
Olive wood, sacred images carved of, 7
Olofaet, a fire-god, in Namoluk, 707
Oloh Ngadju of Borneo, the, 492
Olympia, races for the kingdom at, 156
Omaha Indians, 63, 216, 473, 474
Omens, magic to annul evil, 37; from observation of the sky, 279; from boiling milk, 482; from the smoke and flames of bonfires, 612, 615, 616, 621, 624, 645; from cakes rolled down hill, 620; of marriage, 626, 646
Omonga, a rice-spirit, 416
On or Aun, king of Sweden, 278, 290
Ongtong Java Islands, ceremony at reception of strangers in the, 196
Onitsha, on the Niger, king of, 200; ceremony at eating the new yams at, 483; human scapegoats at, 569
Oracles, given by the king as representative of the god, 94; by inspired priests, 94
Oracular spring at Dodona, 147
Oraons of Bengal, 144, 342, 434
Orchomenus in Boeotia, human sacrifices at, 291
Ordeal of battle, 158; by poison, 294
Orestes at Nemi, 2, 6, 216
Oriental religions in the West, 356-62
Orinoco, Indians of the, 27, 28, 71, 73, 78, 524
Orion, the constellation, 355
Orissa, Queen Victoria worshipped as a deity in, 100
Orkney Islands, transference of sickness by means of water in the, 544
Orotchis, bear-festivals of the, 514
Orpheus, the legend of his death, 379
Osiris, 52, 325, 443; the myth of, 362-8; the ritual of, 368-77; the nature of, 377-382; and the sun, 384; the cults of Adonis, Attis, Dionysus, and, 424; key to mysteries of, 444; and the pig, 472, 475; in relation to sacred bulls, 476
Osiris, Adonis, Attis, their mythical similarity, 325
"Osiris of the mysteries," 376
Osiris-Sep, title of Osiris, 375
Ostiaks, the, 521
Ostrich, ghost of, deceived, 526
Ot Danoms of Borneo, 195, 597
Ottawa Indians, 214, 522, 527
Ounce, ceremony at killing an, 523
"Our Mother among the Water," Mexican goddess, 588
Ovambo of South-west Africa, 224
Owl, eyes of, eaten to make eater see in the dark, 496; life of a person bound up with that of an, 684; sex totem of women, 688
Ox, in magic, 22, 31, 72; corn-spirit as, 457, 466-8; slaughtered at threshing, 459; sacrificed at the *Bouphonia*, 466; effigy of, broken as a spring ceremony in China, 468
Oyo, king of, among the Yorubas, 274

Pacific, oracular inspiration of priests in the Southern, 94
Paddy (unhusked rice), the Father and Mother of the, 419
Padlock as amulet, 242
Paganism and Christianity, resemblances explained as diabolical counterfeits, 358, 361
Palatinate, mimic contest between Summer and Winter in the, 316
——, the Upper, trees asked for pardon on being felled in, 113
Palatine Hill at Rome, 111
Palenque in Central America, ruins of, 10
Palm-branches, in ceremony to procure rain, 74; ashes of, mixed with seed at sowing, 615; stuck in fields to protect them against hail, 617
—— Sunday, 74, 125, 705
—— -tree, thought to ensure fertility, 119
Pan's image whipped with squills, 580
Panes, festival of, 499
Pango, title signifying god, 98
Pans, rustic Greek deities, 464
Panther, ceremony at the killing of a, 221
Panua, tribe of Khonds, 434
Paphos in Cyprus, 329; sanctuary of Aphrodite at, 330; religious prostitution at, 331
Papuans, the, 43, 496, 682; of Finsch Haven, 246
Papyrus of Nebseni, 380; of Nekht, 380
Parents-in-law, their names not to be pronounced, 249-50
Parilia, the, Roman festival of shepherds, 154, 360
Parkinson, John, 281
Parrot, external soul of warlock in a, 669
Parrots' eggs, a signal of death, 273
Parthian monarchs brothers of the Sun, 104
Pârvatî and Siva, marriage of the images of, 320
Paschal candle, 614
—— Mountains, Easter fires on the, 615
Passier, in Sumatra, king of, 277
Pastoral tribes, animal sacraments among, 533
Patagonia, 236; remedy for smallpox in, 250
Patani Bay, the Malays of, 183
Paternity of kings a matter of indifference under female kinship, 154
Paton, W. R., 580
Pawnees, the, 225, 432
Payaguas of South America, 82
Pea-mother, 399, 400; -wolf, 448
Peacock, a totem of the Bhils, 474
Pear-tree as protector of cattle, 119; as life-index of a girl, 682
Pearls, in homoeopathic magic, 37
Peas-cow, 458; -pug, 448
Pebbles thrown into Midsummer fires, 628
Pelew Islands, 116; seclusion of man-slayers in, 215; taboos observed by relations of murdered man in the, 227
Pelops and Hippodamia, 156
Penance observed after building a new house, 117; for killing a boa-constrictor, 222
Pennefather River in Queensland, the natives of the, 39
Pennyroyal, burnt in Midsummer fire, 631
Pentheus, king of Thebes, 378, 392
Pepper as a cure or exorcism, 196; dropped into eyes of strangers, 198
Perche, in France, homoeopathic cure for vomiting in, 16
Perils of the soul, 178-94
Perkunas or Perkuns, the Lithuanian god of thunder and lightning, 161
Persephone, 327, 393-6, 398, 414, 420-24, 469
Persia, horses sacrificed to the Sun in, 79; temporary kings in, 289; king of, 593
Personification of abstract ideas not primitive, 315
Peru, Indians of, 30, 33, 144, 236, 527; theocratic despotism of ancient, 48
Perun, the thunder-god of the Slavs, 161
Peruvian Andes, 79
Peruvians, the ancient, 412
Pessinus, priestly kings at, 9; local legend of Attis at, 347; image of the Mother of the Gods at, 348; high-priest of Cybele at, 353; high-priest perhaps slain in the character of Attis at, 440
Phaedra and Hippolytus, 4, 7
Phalaris and his brazen bull, 281
Phaya Phollathep, "Lord of the Heavenly Hosts," temporary king in Siam, 284
Pheneus, lake of, 110
Philae, the sculptures at, 376, 381
Philippine Islands, the, belief that souls of ancestors are in certain trees in, 115; grave of the Creator in, 264; human sacrifices in, 355, 433; head-hunting in, 441
Philo of Byblus, 293
Philosophy, as a solvent of religion, 162; primitive, 263
Philostratus, on death at low tide, 35
Phoenicia, song of Linus in, 425
Phoenician temples, 330, 331; kings in Cyprus, 332; vintage song, 425, 442
Phrixus and Helle, children of King Athamas, 290
Phrygia, 347, 354; Lityerses in, 425, 426
Phrygian cosmogony, 347; cap of Attis, 353
Picardy, harvest customs in, 451; Lenten fire-customs in, 612
Picts, female descent of kingship among the, 156
Piers, Sir Henry, 120
Pig, sacrificed for rain or sunshine, 73; blood of a, drunk as a means of inspiration, 95; and lamb as expiatory victims, 224; corn-spirit as a, 460-62; in relation to Demeter, 469, and Attis, 471; attitude of Jews to the, 472; in ancient Egypt, 472; used to decoy demons, 549, 556-7. *See also* Pigs
Pigeon, family of Wild, in Samoa, 474
Pigs, magical ceremonies to catch wild, 18; magical stones to breed, 33; sacrificed at the marriage of Sun and Earth, 136; at the Thesmophoria, 469, 476; sacrificed to the moon and to Osiris, 472; reasons for not eating the flesh of, 494; driven through Midsummer fire, 627, and through the need-fire, 640; offered to monster who swallows novices in initiation, 694, 696

Pillar, fever transferred to a, 545
Pine-cones, symbols of fertility, 353; thrown into vaults of Demeter, 353
—— -tree, in the myth and ritual of Attis, 347, 348, 350, 352; in the rites of Osiris, 380; sacred to Dionysus, 387
Pipiles of Central America, 136
Pirua, granary of maize, 412
Pitteri Pennu, Khond god of increase, 557
Placenta (afterbirth) and navel-string, contagious magic of, 39-41
Plague, transferred to camel, 540; sent away in scapegoat, 565
Plane-tree, Dionysus in, 387
Planets, human victims sacrificed to, 444
Plantain-tree, afterbirth buried under a, 40; fertilised by parents of twins, 137
Plants, magic to make them grow, 28; influence persons homoeopathically, 29; sexes of, 114; thought to be animated by spirits, 487; external soul in, 681
Plataea, festival of the Daedala at, 143; the Archon of, 224
Plough, in relation to Dionysus, 387; piece of Yule log inserted in the, 645
Ploughing, by women as a rain-charm, 70; ceremony of, performed by temporary king, 284, 288; Prussian custom at, 342; in rites of Osiris, 375
Plurality of souls, doctrine of the, 690
Pluto, carries off Persephone, 393, 469-70
Plutus, begotten in thrice-ploughed field, 421
Poison, continence observed at brewing, 219
Poison ordeal, 294
Poland, objection to iron ploughshares in, 225; harvest customs in, 404, 406, 451; Christmas custom in, 450; need-fire in, 641
Pole-star, homoeopathic magic of the, 34
Pollution and holiness not differentiated by savages, 223
Polynesia, taboos in, 205, 206, 259; sacredness of the head in, 231; infanticide in, 293
Polynesian chiefs sacred, 205
Polynesians, oracular inspiration of priests among the, 94; their way of ridding themselves of sacred contagion, 473
Polytheism evolved out of animism, 117
Pomegranate causes virgin to conceive, 347
Pomegranates sprung from the blood of Dionysus, 389; seeds of, not eaten at the Thesmophoria, 389
Pomerania, harvest custom in, 430
Pometia sacked by the Romans, 6
Pommerol, Dr., 611
Pomos of California, 562
Pompey the Great, 328
Ponape, one of the Caroline Islands, treatment of the navel-string in, 40; king of, 232
Pongol, Hindoo family festival, 482
Pons Sublicius at Rome, 225
Poona, rain-making at, 70; incarnation of elephant-headed god at, 100
Poor Man, name applied to the corn-spirit after harvest, 465
—— Old Woman, last sheaf left for, 465
Poor Woman, name applied to the corn-spirit after harvest, 465
Poplar wood used to kindle need-fire, 639
Porta Capena at Rome, 4, 351
Portraits, souls in, 193
Portugal, belief as to death at ebb tide in, 35
Poseidon, 97, 471
Potato Woman, the Old, 405; -mother, 413; -wolf, 448, 449; -dog, 449
Potatoes, magical stones for increase of, 33; custom at eating new, 481
Prayers, to the sun, 14, 26, 78; for rain, 71 77, 86, 118, 159-61; to Dionysus, 387; to dead animals, 507, 522-4
Precious stones, magic of, 34
Pregnancy, 238, 239
Pretenders to divinity among Christians, 101
Priest, of Diana, 1, 8, 710; of Nemi, 8, 161, 163, 167; and magician, their antagonism, 52; drenched with water as a rain-charm, 70; rolled on fields as a fertility charm, 139; of Zeus, 159; brings back lost souls in a bag, 186; of Dionysus, 291; sows and plucks the first rice, 482; of Aricia, 592; of the Earth, 594
Priestesses, 94, 594
Priestly kings, 9
Priests, magical powers attributed to, 53, 54; inspired by gods, 94; influence wielded by, 196; their hair unshorn, 232; foods tabooed to, 238; of Attis, the emasculated, 347; sacrifice human victims, 589, 591
Princesses married to foreigners or men of low birth, 154
Processions, for rain in Sicily, 74; with bears from house to house, 512; with sacred animals, 535; to the Midsummer bonfires, 628, 630; of giants (effigies) at popular festivals, 654
Progress, the magician's, 45-8
Prophets, Hebrew, their ethical religion, 51
Propitiation, essential to religion, 50; of the souls of the slain, 212; of the spirits of slain animals, 217, 220; of the spirits of plants, 487; of wild animals by hunters, 518-32; of vermin by farmers, 530
Prostitution, sacred, before marriage, 330; suggested origin of, 331
Provence, priests thought to possess the power of averting storms in, 53; May-trees in, 124; mock execution of Caramantran on Ash Wednesday in, 304; Midsummer fires in, 630; the Yule log in, 637
Prussia, contagious magic in, 44; custom at spring ploughing in, 342; harvest customs in, 421, 426; the Corn-goat in, 454; the Bull at reaping in, 459; Midsummer fires in, 627
——, East, harvest customs in, 401, 453, 454, 457
——, West, harvest customs in, 402, 457; pretence of birth of child on harvest-field in, 406, 421
Prussian rulers formerly burnt, 274
Prussians, the old, 288; their funeral feasts, 227; supreme ruler of, 274

Psoloeis, the, at Orchomenus, 291, 292
Psylli, a Snake clan, 83, 502
Ptarmigans and ducks, dramatic contest of the, among the Esquimaux, 317
Puberty, girls secluded at, 595; initiatory rites at, 692
Punchkin and the parrot, story of, 669, 687, 690
Punjaub, the, General Nicholson worshipped in his lifetime in, 100; human sacrifice in, 112; belief as to tattooing in, 180; Snake tribe in, 535, 536; human scapegoat in, 566
Puppets, of rushes thrown into the Tiber, 493; used to attract demons of sickness from living patients, 564
Puppies, red-haired, sacrificed by the Romans to the Dog-star, 444
Purification, of man-slayers, 212, 215; of hunters and fishers, 216; after contact with a pig, 472; by washing, 473; before partaking of new fruits, 484, 488; by emetics, 485, 488; by standing on sacrificed human victim, 572; by beating, 602
Purificatory ceremonies, at reception of strangers, 195; on return from a journey, 197
—— theory of the fires of the fire-festivals, 642, 647; more probable than the solar theory, 650
Puyallup Indians, 256
Pygmalion, king of Cyprus, 332
Pythagoras, maxims of, 44, 45
Python clan, in Senegambia, 502

Quartz used in circumcision, 224
Quartz-crystal used in rain-making, 76
Queen, name given to last corn cut at harvest, 407; the Harvest, in England, 405; of Athens, married to Dionysus, 142; of the Corn-ears, 405; of Egypt, the wife of Ammon, 142; of Heaven, 337, 711; of May, 127, 129, 131, 320
Queensland, beliefs as to the afterbirth in, 39; namesakes of the dead change their names in some of the tribes of, 253; expulsion of a demon in Central, 562; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 598
Quetzalcoatl, Mexican god, 491
Quilacare, suicide of the kings of, 274-5
Quinoa-mother, the, 413
Quiteve, title of king of Sofala, 273
Quito, the kings of, 431
Quonde, in Nigeria, king-killing at, 271

Ra, the Egyptian sun-god, 362, 364, 366, 475; and Isis, 260
Race, to determine the Whitsuntide king, 129; succession to a kingdom determined by a, 156; for a bride, 156; of reapers to last sheaf, 459
Races, at Whitsuntide, 124, 129; on horseback to the Maypole, 132; at fire-festivals, 611
Radica, a festival at the end of the Carnival in Frosinone, 302
Rain, the magical control of, 62-78, 234, 629, 645; prayers for, 71, 77, 86, 118, 159-61; kings expected to give, 85-7, 98-9; supposed to fall only as a result of magic, 87; Zeus as the god of, 159; prevented by the blood of a woman who has miscarried, 209
Rain-bird, 72; -charms, 71, 131, 210, 234, 300, 341, 400, 437, 438; doctor, among the Toradjas of Celebes, 68; -gods, 73-5; king, 70, 107; -makers, 62, 84-6, 107, 269, 270; song, sung by women, 118; -stones, 76, 85; temple, in Angoniland, 64
Rajah, temporary, after death of rajah, 287
Rajahs, among the Malays, supernatural powers attributed to, 88; two, in Timor, 177
Rajputana, gardens of Adonis in, 343
Rali, the fair of, in India, 319
Ram, with golden fleece, 290; as vicarious sacrifice for human victim, 292; sacrificed to Ammon, 477; Tibetan goddess riding on a, 492; killing the sacred, 500; consecration of a white, 534
Ram's skull in charm to avert demons, 492
Rama, his battle with the king of Ceylon, 670
Ramanga, among the Betsileo, 229
Raratonga, in the Pacific, 39
Rarhi Brahmans of Bengal, 602
Raskolnik, Russian Dissenter, 71
Raspberries, wild, ceremony at gathering the first, 486
Rat's hair as a charm, 31
Rats, in magic, 39; superstitious precautions of farmers against, 531
Rattle, wooden, swung by twins to make fair or foul weather, 66
Rattlesnakes respected by North-American Indians, 520
Raven's eggs in homoeopathic magic, 32
Reapers, contests between, 401, 403, 404, 407, 426, 439; throw sickles at the last standing corn, 401, 403, 404, 407, 446, 452; blindfolded, 404, 407; of rice deceiving the rice-spirit, 414; pretend to mow down visitors to the harvest-field, 430; remedies for pains in the back, 455
——, Egyptian, their lamentations, 338, 371, 382, 443, 444
Reaping-match of Lityerses, 426
Rebirth from a golden cow, 197; of ancestors in their descendants, 256
Recall of the soul, 180
Red colour in magic, 15; wool, 242
Red-haired men sacrificed by ancient Egyptians, 378, 380, 443, 476; puppies sacrificed by the Romans, 444, 476
Reddening the face of a god, 148
Reddis or Kapus in Madras Presidency, 78
Reflection, the soul identified with the, 192
Reflections in water, supposed dangers of, 192
Regalia, sanctity of, in Celebes, 295
Regeneration from a golden cow, 197
Regicide among the Slavs, 278; modified custom of, 283
Regifugium at Rome, 157, 301
Reincarnation of animals, 526-7
Relations, names of, tabooed, 249-51; of the dead take new names for fear of the ghost, 253

Religion, and magic, 48-60, 64, 90, 92, 162, 324, 711; defined, 50; two elements of, a theoretical and a practical, 50; and science, 51, 712; the Age of, 56; transition from magic to, 57; and music, 334, 335
Religions, oriental, in the West, 356-62
Religious associations among the Indians of North America, 698
Remission of sins through the shedding of blood, 356
Remulus, 149. *See* Romulus
Renan's theory of Adonis, 340, 341
Renouf, Sir P. le Page, 384
Reproductive powers, beating people to stimulate their, 581-2
Reptile clan of the Omaha Indians, 474
Resurrection, 236; of the god, 300, 386; of the tree-spirit, 300; of a god in the hunting, pastoral, and agricultural stages of society, 301; enacted in Shrovetide and Lenten ceremonies, 307; of the effigy of Death, 312; of the Carnival, 315; of the Wild Man, 315; of Kostrubonko, 317; of Attis, 350, 360; of Osiris, 374, 376; of Dionysus, 468; of animals, 516, 529; of fish, 527; divine, in Mexican ritual, 592; ritual of death and, 691-701
Rex Nemorensis, King of the Wood, 3
Rheumatism, and magic, 44, 45; popular cure for, 196
Rhine, dramatic contest between Winter and Summer on the middle, 316
Rhodes, worship of Helen in, 356
Rhodians worship the sun, 79
Rhys, Sir John, 635, 636
Rice, in homoeopathic magic, 28, 29; in bloom treated like a pregnant woman, 115, 414; used to attract the soul conceived as a bird, 181, 184; in water, divination by, 256; soul of, 413-15, 417; two sheaves as "husband and wife," 418; (paddy) father and mother of the, 419; "eating the soul of the rice," 482; the new, ceremonies at eating, 482
Rice bride and bridegroom, 418; cakes, 490; child, 417; mother, 413, 415, 417
Rickets, cure for, 682
Riedel, J. G. F., 696
Rings to prevent the escape of the soul, 180; as amulets, 226, 243; as spiritual fetters, 243; and knots tabooed, 238-44
Ritual, of Adonis, 335-41; of Attis, 347-352; of Dionysus, 389; primitive, marks of, 411; magical or propitiatory, 411; myths dramatised in, 608; of death and resurrection, 691-701
Rock-crystal in rain-charms, 72, 85
Roepstorff, F. A. de, 255
Romans, sacrificed pregnant victims to ensure fertility, 28; the ancient, their ceremonies for procuring rain, 77, 78; superstition as to egg-shells, 201; cutting hair or nails on shipboard, 234; superstitious objection to clasped hands or crossed legs, 240; belief in the magic virtue of divine names, 261; adopt the worship of the Phrygian Mother of the Gods, 348; their sacrifice of red-haired puppies, 444, 476; their cure for fever, 543; deemed sacred the places struck by lightning, 709
Romanus Lecapenus, the emperor, 680
Rome, the Sacrificial King at, 9, 106; rain-making in, 78, 149; sacred trees in, 111; kings of, 146-51; King and Queen of, 147, 151; founded by settlers from Alba Longa, 148; descent of the kingship in, 152; Midsummer festival in ancient, 153, 154; priests in, 224; name of guardian deity kept secret, 262; *Regifugium* at, 301; Phrygian Mother of the Gods brought to, 348; Festival of Joy (*Hilaria*) at, 350-51; sacrifice of she-goat to Vedijovis at, 392; annual sacrifice of October horse at, 478; festival of the Compitalia at, 491; the Mother and Grandmother of Ghosts at, 491-3; human scapegoats in ancient, 577; Saturnalia at, 583; sacred fire of Vesta at, 665
Romulus, 111, 148, 158, 378
Romulus or Remulus, King of Alba, 149
Rook, island of, expulsion of the devil from the, 547; initiation of young men in the, 695
Rope used to keep off demons, 559
Rose, the Little May, 125; the white, dyed red by the blood of Aphrodite, 336
Roumania, festival of Green George in, 126
Roumanians of Transylvania, 191, 227, 341
Rowan, parasitic, 702
Rowan-tree, a protection against witches, 620
Royalty, the burden of, 168-78
Runaways, knots as charms to stop, 242
Runes, magic, Odin and the, 355
Rupert's Day, effigy burnt on, 614
Rupture, cure for, 682
Russia, thieves' candles in, 56; rain-making in, 63, 71; celebration of Whitsuntide in, 121, 128, 134; St. George's Day in, 128; priest rolled on the fields to fertilise them, 137; use of knots as amulets in, 242; funeral ceremonies of Kostrubonko, etc., in, 317-18; harvest customs in, 405, 425; wood-spirits in, 465; expulsion of demons in Eastern, 559-60; Midsummer fires in, 627, 656; treatment of the effigy of Kupalo in, 652; story of the external soul in, 671; birth trees in, 682; fern-seed at Midsummer in, 704
Rustling of leaves regarded as the voice of spirits, 115
Ruthenia, Midsummer bonfires in, 627
Ruthenian burglars, their charms to cause sleep, 30
Rye-boar, 460, 461; -mother, 399, 400; -dog, 449; -goat, 454; -pug, 449; -sow, 447-60; -wolf, 447-448; -woman, 428; Woman, the Old, 405

Sabaea or Sheba, kings of, 200
Sabarios, a Lithuanian festival, 480
Sabine priests, 224
Sable-hunters, rules observed by, 525
Sacaea, a Babylonian festival, 281; mock king of, 443
Sacrament in the rites of Attis, 351; of swine's flesh, 470; of first-fruits, 479, combined with a sacrifice of them, 488; of eating a god, 498; types of animal, 532-8
Sacramental bread, 491; eating of corn-spirit in animal form, 470; meal of new rice, 482
Sacred persons, names of tabooed, 257-9

Sacrifice, of the king's son, 289; of virility, 349, 350; not to be touched, 473; annual, of a sacred animal, 475; of first-fruits, 488; of heifer at kindling need-fire, 641
Sacrifices, offered to ancestors, 71, 72; human, 79, 96, 112, 117, 146, 279, 281, 290, 354, 355, 378-80, 431, 569, 571, 579, 587, 609, 617, 653, 657, 658; offered to kings, 104; offered to a sacred sword, 109; offered to trees, 112, 113, 115, 116, 118; on roof of new house, 117; to water-spirits, 146; to the dead, 175; at foundation of buildings, 191; to souls of slain enemies, 212; vicarious, 292; of children among the Semites, 293; offered in connection with irrigation, 370
Sacrificial king at Rome, 9, 106
Sagard, Gabriel, 527
Saghalien, facilitating childbirth in, 240
Sahagun, B. de, 587
St. Andrews, witch burned at, 243
St. Angelo, ill-treated in drought, 75
St. Bride, her Day in the Highlands of Scotland, 134; an old goddess of fertility, 135
St. Bridget, 134
St. Columba, 101
St. Dasius, martyrdom of, 584-5
St. Denys, his seven heads, 366
St. Francis of Paolo, 74
St. Gens, his image used in rain-making, 77
St. George, festival of, 360
St. George's Day, fertilisation of barren women by fruit-trees on, 119; Green George on, 126-8; ceremony to fertilise the fields on, 137
St. Gervais, spring of, 77
St. Hippolytus, 5
St. James, 50, 51
St. John, Midsummer festival of, in Sardinia, 343; Sweethearts of, 343; oil of, found on oak leaves at Midsummer, 661-2, 706
—— the Baptist, bathing on his day, 70; his chapel at Athens, 545; associated with Midsummer Day, 622
——, the Knights of, 630; Grand Master of the Order of, 631
St. John's Day, swinging on, 289; Midsummer fires on, 624, 628; fern-seed blooms on, 704. *See* Midsummer Day
St. John's Eve, in Sweden, 122; Russian ceremony on, 318; in Malta, 631
St. Joseph, ill-treated in drought, 75
St. Lawrence, fire of, 536
St. Louis, 90
St. Mary, Isle of, 523
St. Maughold, gives veil to St. Bridget, 134
St. Michael, ill-treated in drought, 75
St. Patrick, canon attributed to, 90
St. Paul, on immortality, 39
St. Peter, as giver of rain, 77
St. Peter's Day, 318, 360
St. Pons, his image used in rain-making, 77
St. Rochus's Day, need-fire kindled on, 641
Saint Sécaire, Mass of, 54
St. Stephen's Day, 537
St. Sylvester's Day, 561
St. Tecla, falling sickness cured in her church at Llandegla in Wales, 545
St. Vitus's Day, 644
Saints, violence done to images of, to procure rain, 75; images of, dipped in water as a rain-charm, 77
Sakalavas of Madagascar, 172, 258, 295
Sakvari, song, ancient Indian hymn, 67
Sal tree, 145
Salish or Flathead Indians, 187, 486
Salmon, twins thought to be, 66; ceremonies at catching the first of the season, 528
Salmoneus, king of Elis, 77, 149, 159, 292
Salt, abstinence from, 23, 138; not to be eaten, 218, 510, 595, 602; Mexican Goddess of, 588
Salt-pans, continence observed by workers in, 219
Salvation of the individual soul, importance attached to, in Oriental religions, 357
Samarcand, homoeopathic magic applied to babies in, 32; New Year ceremony in, 285
Samaveda, the, 67
Samhnagan, Hallowe'en bonfires, 635
Samoa, rain-making in, 75; taboo on persons who have handled the dead in, 206; butterfly god in, 474; the Wild Pigeon family in, 474
Samorin, title of the kings of Calicut, 275
Samoyed shamans, their familiar spirits, 683
Samoyeds of Siberia, 252
Sampson, Agnes, a Scotch witch, 542
Samyas monastery, near Lhasa, 573
San Pellegrina, church of, at Ancona, 585
Sanctity and uncleanness not clearly differentiated in the primitive mind, 607
Sandwich Islands, the king personated the god in the, 93, 94; precaution as to spittle of chiefs in the, 237
Saning Sari, rice goddess, 415
Sanitation improved through superstition, 201
Sankara and the Grand Lama, 189
Santals, their belief in the absence of the soul in dreams, 182
Saparoea, East Indian island, fishermen's magic in, 18
Sarawak, 15, 25, 89; taboos observed in, 24
Sardines worshipped by Indians of Peru, 527
Sardinia, gardens of Adonis in, 343; Sweethearts of St. John at Midsummer in, 343-4; Midsummer fires in, 344
Sarmata Islands, marriage of the Sun and Earth in, 136
Satan, annually expelled by the Wotyaks, 559, and by the Cheremiss, 560; preaches a sermon in North Berwick church, 681
Saturn, the god of sowing, 583; his festival the Saturnalia, 584
Saturnalia, 136, 153, 553, 575; the Roman, 158, 583-7
Satyrs in relation to goats, 464
Savage, the, 47; his awe and dread of everything new, 225; our debt to, 262-4; not to be judged by European standards, 294; not illogical, 517; his belief that animals have souls, 518; unable to discriminate clearly between men and animals, 532; secretiveness of, 691; his dread of sorcery, 691
Savage Island, kings killed on account of dearth in, 87; cessation of monarchy in, 176
Savage philosophy, 263
Saxo Grammaticus, 33, 155
Saxons of Transylvania, 238, 239, 306, 312, 316, 456, 530, 672

Saxony, May or Whitsuntide trees in, 123; Whitsuntide mummers in, 298, 300; "carrying out Death" in, 309; Oats bride and bridegroom in, 409; fires to burn the witches in, 622
Scandinavia, female descent of the kingship in, 155
Scandinavian custom of the Yule Boar, 461
Scapegoat, Jewish use of, 569; a material vehicle for expulsion of evils, 575
Scapegoats, animals as, 540, 565, 568; birds as, 541; public, 562-77; divine animals as, 570, 576; divine men as, 571, 576; in general, 574
——, human, 542, 565, 569; in classical antiquity, 577-87
Scheube, Dr. B., 507
Schleswig, custom at threshing in, 431
Schrenck, L. von, 511
Schuyler, E., 543
Science, and magic, 48, 711; and religion, 712
Scorpion's bite, pain transferred to an ass, 544
Scorpions, Isis and the, 364
Scotland, magical images in, 56; witches raise wind in, 80; iron as a safeguard against fairies in, 226; witch burnt in, 243; harvest customs in, 341, 403, 406-8, 452; names given to last corn cut in, 403, 409, 480; saying as to the wren in, 536; witchcraft in, 542; worship of Grannus in, 611; Beltane fires in, 617-620; few traces of Midsummer fires in, 631; Hallowe'en fires in, 635; need-fire in, 639-41. *See also* Highlands
Scouvion, or *Escouvion*, in Belgium, 610
Scrofula, 90, 203, 204
Scylla, daughter of Nisus, 670
Scythians, the, 87
Sea Dyaks, 25, 239, 249, 531
Sea-god, human sacrifice to, 579
Seals, care taken of the bladders and bones of, 526
Sealskins in sympathy with the tides, 35
Seasons, magical and religious theories of the, 324
Seb (Keb or Geb), Egyptian earth-god, father of Osiris, 362
Secretiveness of the savage, 691
Sedna, Esquimau goddess, 552
Seed-corn, 420, 452, 461, 463, 469, 470, 666; -rice, 284; -time, annual expulsion of demons at, 557
Segera, a sago magician of Kiwai, 379
Seker (Sokari), title of Osiris, 375
Selangor, rice-crop supposed to depend on the district officer of, 89; durian-trees threatened in, 113
Seligman, Dr. C. G., 266, 270
Semele, mother of Dionysus, 265, 389
Seminole Indians of Florida, 486, 520
Semites, the, 293
Semitic Baal, 281; kings as hereditary deities, 333; personal names, indicating relationship to a deity, 333; worship of Adonis, 325
Senal Indians of California, 707
Sencis of Peru, the, 78
Senegambia, Python clan in, 502; the mistletoe in, 660
Serbia, rain-making ceremony in, 69; Midsummer fires in, 627; the Yule log in, 638; need-fire in, 640
Serbian women's charm to hoodwink their husbands, 32
Serpents, in magic, 32; ceremonies observed after killing, 222; killing the sacred, 501; burnt alive, 655, 658
Servius Tullius, Roman king, 152
Set, or Typhon, brother of Osiris, 363, 365, 475
Seven, the number in magical ceremonies, etc., 242, 280, 417, 610, 631
Sex totems, 687-8
Sexes, of plants, recognised by some savages and by the ancients, 114; influence of the, on vegetation, 135-9; danger apprehended from the relation of the, 700
Sexual intercourse practised to make the crops and fruit grow, 135-6
Seyf el-Mulook and the jinnee, story of, 674
Shadow, the soul identified with the, 189-192
Shadows, of people drawn out by ghosts, 190; animals injured through their, 190; of certain persons dangerous, 190, 207; of people built into foundations of edifices, 191
Shakespeare on deatn at ebb tide, 35
Shamans, 88, 683
Shanghai, geomancy at, 36
Shans of Burma, 77
Sheba or Sabaea, kings of, 200
Sheep, torn by wolf in homoeopathic magic, 32; used in purificatory ceremony, 214; black, sacrificed for rain, 72
Shell, called the "old man," 33
Shenty, Egyptian cow-goddess, 375
Shetland, witches in, 81
Shilluk, the, 266, 294; their kings, 295
Shoes, of priestess, 174; of boar's skin worn by king at inauguration, 594
Shooting star, superstition as to, 279
Shrove Tuesday, customs on, 134, 302, 305, 317, 461, 614, 651, 656
Shrovetide customs, 298; Bear, 306
Shuswap Indians, 66, 190, 207
Siam, kings of, 99, 224, 257, 593; objection to the king's image on coins in, 193; mode of executing royal criminals in, 228; belief that a guardian spirit dwells in the head in, 230; ceremony at cutting a child's hair in, 235; temporary kings in, 284, 289; annual expulsion of demons in, 559; human scapegoat in, 570
Siamese monks, 112; story of the external soul, 669
Siaoo, belief as to sylvan spirits in, 116
Siberia, bear-festival in, 510; sable-hunters in, 525; external souls of shamans in, 683
Sibyl, the, and the Golden Bough, 3
Sibylline Books, the, 348
Sicily, attempts to compel the saints to give rain in, 74, 75; gardens of Adonis in, 344; Good Friday ceremonies in, 345; Midsummer fires in, 631
Sickness, homoeopathic magic for the cure of, 15; explained by the absence of the soul, 183; ascribed to possession by demons and cured by exorcism, 196, 547; cured or prevented by effigies, 492; transferred to things, 539, or people, 540, 544, or animals, 540, 544; bonfires a protection against, 610
Sicknesses expelled in a ship, 563
Sierra Leone, 174; custom of beating a king on the eve of his coronation in, 176

Sieve, water poured through, as a rain-charm, 71
Sikkim, fear of the camera in, 193
Silenuses, minor deities associated with Dionysus, 464
Silesia, Whitsuntide King in, 129; Whitsuntide customs in, 132; "carrying out Death" in, 309-11, 314, 614; bringing in Summer, 311; the Grandmother at harvest in, 401; names given to last sheaf in, 402; the Wheat Bride at harvest in, 409; harvest customs in, 428, 449, 451, 453, 457; expulsion of witches and evil spirits in, 560, 561; need-fire in, 640
Silk-cotton trees reverenced, 112
Silkworms, taboos observed by breeders of, 218
Silvanus, the Roman wood-god, 140, 141
Silvii, family name of kings of Alba, 149, 163
Simeon, prince of Bulgaria, 680
Similarity in magic, law of, 11
Singarmati Deva, Indian goddess, 218
Singhalese, the, 226
Sins, confession of, 198, 217, 540, 541-2, 553, 569; the remission of, through the shedding of blood, 356; transferred to a buffalo calf, 541; transferred vicariously to human beings, 542; of the Children of Israel transferred to scapegoat, 569
Sioux Indians, 497
Sirius, the Dog-star, 370, 384
Sisters, taboos observed by, 23, 25
Situa, annual festival of the Incas, 553
Siva and Pârvatî, marriage of the images of, 320
Skeat, W. W., 417
Skeleton drenched with water as a ra n-charm, 71
Skin disease caused by eating a sacred animal, 473
Skins of sacrificed animals, uses made of, 466, 477, 499-501, 529; of human victims, 591
Skipping-rope played at bear-festival, 512
Skulls, of head-hunters' victims preserved as relics, 433; of bears and foxes worshipped and consulted as oracles, 505; of turtles propitiated, 526
Sky, twins called children of the, 67; observation of the, for omens, 279
Skye, last sheaf called the Cripple Goat in, 455; the need-fire in, 618
Slave, charm to bring back a runaway, 31
Slave priest at Nemi, 3
Slave Coast of West Africa, negroes of the, 116; exorcism of demons from children on the, 196, 226; precautions as to the spittle of kings on the, 237
Slaves, license granted to, at the Saturnalia, 158, 583
Slavonia, harvest customs in, 404; the Corn-spirit in, 448; custom of "carrying out Death" in, 578; the Yule log in, 638; need-fire in, 641; stories of the external soul in, 671
Slavonians, South, 30, 32, 114, 119, 649. *See also* Slavs
Slavs, 110, 161, 278, 302, 400, 649, 665; of Carinthia, 126; South, 44, 636
Sleep, charms to cause, 30; absence of the soul in, 181-2; forbidden in house after a death, 182; sick people not allowed to, 193
Slovenes, 128; of Oberkrain, 134
Smallpox, 493; demon of, transferred to a sow, 540; blood of monkey used to exorcise the devil of, 549; flight from the evil spirit of, 550; demon of, expelled by means of an image, 563; expelled in a boat, 564
Smith's craft sacred, 86
Smoke, in rain-making, 73; of cedar inhaled as means of inspiration, 95; of bonfires, 612, 622, 645; of need-fire, 640; used to stupefy witches in the clouds, 650
Smoking as a means of inducing a state of ecstasy, 484; in honour of slain bears, 522
Snail supposed to suck blood of cattle, 190
Snake, used in rain-charm, 72; respected by Indians of Carolina, 519; worshipped, 535; said to wound a girl at puberty, 601; seven-headed, external soul of witch in a, 676
Snake-bite, charm against, 32; clan, exposed infants to snakes, 502; -god, married to women, 145; -stone, 34; tribe, in the Punjaub, 535
Snipe, fever transferred to a, 545
Snorri Sturluson, 379
Sochit or *Sochet*, epithet of Isis, 383
Society, uniformity of occupation in primitive, 61; ancient, built on the principle of subordination of the individual to the community, 357
Sofala, kings of, put to death, 272
Sogamosa or Sogamoza, the pontiff of, 104; heir to the throne not allowed to see the sun, 595
Sokari (Seker), a title of Osiris, 375
Solar theory of the fires of the fire-festivals, 642, 643
Solomon Islands, the, disposal of cut hair in, 235; ceremony for getting rid of fatigue in, 540
Solstice, the summer, its importance for primitive man, 622; the winter, reckoned by the ancients the Nativity of the Sun, 358
Solstitial fires perhaps rain-charms, 706
Son of God, alleged incarnation of the, in America, 102; of the king, sacrificed for his father, 289
Songs of the corn-reapers, 424
Sopater accused of binding the winds, 81
Sorcerers, 84, 233, 235, 236; souls extracted or detained by, 187, 188; influence wielded by, 196; injure men through their names, 245; exorcise demons, 548
Sorcery, the dread of, 233, 691; protections against, 621, 629, 663
Sorrowful One, vaults of the, 371
Sothis, Egyptian name for Sirius, 370
Soul, the perils of the, 178; as a mannikin, 178; absence and recall of the, 180; as a shadow and a reflection, 189-92; in the blood, 228, 230; identified with the personal name, 244; of man-god, 265; succession to the, 293-5; of the rice, 413, 415; thought to be seated in the liver, 497; the notion of a, 690; the unity and indivisibility of the, 690. *See also* Souls
——, the external, in folk-tales, 667-78; in inanimate things, 679; in plants, 681; in animals, 683; kept in totem, 690
Soul-boxes, amulets as, 679-80; -stone, 680

Souls, of the dead in trees, 115; every man thought to have four, 179; light and heavy, thin and fat, 179; transference of, 184, 185; abducted by demons, 186; extracted or detained by sorcerers, 187-8; supposed to be in portraits, 193; of slain enemies propitiated, 213; of beasts respected, 223; of the dead transmitted to successors, 294; immortal, attributed to animals, 518; the plurality of, 690
South Sea Islands, human gods in the, 96
Sow, corn-spirit as, 460; the cropped black, at Hallowe'en, 636
Sowing, homoeopathic magic at, 28; sexual intercourse before, 136; continence at, 138; rites of, in Egypt, 371; and ploughing, ceremony of, in the rites of Osiris, 375; expulsion of demons at, 575
Spain, belief as to death at ebb tide in, 35; Midsummer fires in, 631
Spark Sunday in Switzerland, 613
Sparrows, charm to keep them from the corn, 530
Sparta, state sacrifices at, 9; sacrifices to the sun at, 79; king not to be touched, 224; warned by oracle against a lame reign, 273; octennial tenure of kingship at, 279
Spears, sacred, 351, 571
Speke, Captain J. H., 196
Spells, cast by strangers, 197; at hair-cutting, 233; cast by witches on union of man and wife, 650
Spelt-goat, last sheaf called the, 456
Spices used in exorcism of demons, 196
Spiders in homoeopathic magic, 31; ceremony at killing, 524
Spindles not to be carried openly on the highroads, 20; not to be twirled while men are in council, 20
Spinning forbidden to women under certain circumstances, 20
Spirit, Brethren and Sisters of the Free, 101; of vegetation, *see* Vegetation; the Great, of American Indians, 264
Spirits, in trees, 112; water, 145; averse to iron, 225; evil, fear of attracting the attention of, 248; distinguished from gods, 411; of the woods, 465; retreat of the army of, 546
Spitting, forbidden, 218; upon knots as a charm, 241; at ceremony of expulsion of evils, 568
Spittle, used in magic, 13, 233, 234, 237; tabooed, 237; used in making a covenant, 237; magical virtue of, 435, 437
Sprenger, the inquisitor, 681
Spring, magical ceremonies for the revival of nature in, 320; ceremony at the beginning of, in China, 468
Spring customs and harvest customs compared, 410
Spring, oracular, at Dodona, 147
Springbok, not eaten by Bushmen, 495
Squirrels burnt in Easter bonfires, 616, 656
Stabbing men's shadows in order to injure the men, 189
Standing on one foot, custom of, 284, 285, 288
Star, falling, in magic, 17; the Evening, in Keats's last sonnet, 34; of Salvation, 346; of Bethlehem, 347; the Morning, 432
Stars, shooting, superstitions as to, 279
Stella Maris, an epithet of the Virgin Mary, 383
Stepping over persons forbidden, 211; over dead panther, 221
Sternberg, Leo, 513, 517
Sticks, charred, uses of, 614, 616, 624, 626; and stones, evils transferred to, 540; whittled, 508, 512
Stiens of Cambodia, the, 524
Stinging with ants as a form of purification, 601
Stone, used in ceremony to facilitate childbirth, 14; supposed to cure jaundice, 16; treading on a, as a homoeopathic charm, 33; (*lapis manalis*) used in rain-making at Rome, 77-8; holed, in magic, to make sunshine, 78; external soul in a, 680; magical, put into body of novice at initiation, 699
Stone-throwing as a fertility charm, 7; -curlew as a cure for jaundice, 16
Stones anointed in order to avert bullets from warriors, 26; homoeopathic magic of, 33; precious, magical qualities of, 34; rain-making by means of, 75, 85; in charms to make the sun shine, 78; in wind charms, 80; ghosts in, 190; sacred, 235; in last sheaf, 402, 403; criminal crushed between, 431; fatigue transferred to, 540
Stoning human scapegoats, 579
Storms, Catholic priests thought to possess the power of averting, 53; caused by cutting or combing the hair, 234
Stow, in Suffolk, witch at, 44
Strangers, taboos on intercourse with, 194; suspected of practising magic arts, 194; ceremonies at reception of, 195; slain as representatives of the corn-spirit, 426; regarded as representatives of the corn-spirit, 429, 431, 439
Straw, wrapt round fruit-trees as a protection against evil spirits, 561; tied round trees to make them fruitful, 612
Straw-bull at harvest, 457; -goat, 456
Strength of people bound up with their hair, 680
Strings, knotted, as amulets, 243
Strudeli and Strätelli, female spirits of the wood, 561
Stseelis Indians of British Columbia, 605
Stubbes, Phillip, his *Anatomie of Abuses*, 123
Stubble-cock, name of harvest supper, 451
Styx, passage of Aeneas across the, 707
Substitutes, put to death instead of kings, 278, 282, 289; temporary, for the Shah of Persia, 289; for human sacrifices, 354
Substitution for human victims, of animals, 292, 392, 436; of rice-cakes, 490; of effigies, 491
Sudanese, 30
Suffocation as a mode of executing royal criminals, 228
Sulka, the, of New Britain, 64, 76, 247
Sulla, at the temple of Diana, 164
"Sultan of the Scribes," at Fez, 286
Sumatra, magical image to obtain offspring in, 14; pregnant woman not to stand at the door in, 21; homoeopathic magic at sowing rice in, 28; rain-charm by means of a black cat in, 72; personification of the rice in, 415; tigers respected in, 519; human scapegoat in, 570

Summer, bringing in the, 311-16; and Winter, battle of, 316-17
Summer-trees, 311, 314
Sun, prayers offered to the, 14, 26, 78; magical control of the, 78-80; ceremonies at eclipses of the, 78; ancient Egyptian ceremony for the regulation of the, 78; sacrifices to the, 79; chief deity of the Rhodians, 79; supposed to drive in a chariot, 79; caught by net or string, 79; father of the Incas, 104; Parthian monarchs the brothers of the, 104; and Earth, marriage of the, 136, 145; not allowed to shine on sacred persons, 169, 170; represented as a man with a bull's head, 281; Adonis as the, 337; Nativity of the, 358; the Unconquered, Mithra identified with, 358; Osiris as the, 384; first-fruits offered to the, 431; ceremony at the reappearance of the, in the Arctic regions, 551; hearts of human victims offered to the, 589; rule not to see the, 595; not to shine on girls at puberty, 596-600, 602; symbolized by a wheel, 644; fern-seed procured by shooting at the, 705; the ultimate cooling of the, 713
Sun-god, the, 73, 105; -goddess, 168
Sunflower roots, ceremony at eating, 487
Sunshine, use of fire as a charm to produce, 647-8
Surinam, the Bush negroes of, 166, 473
Swabia, the Harvest-May in, 118; May-trees in, 123; disposal of cut hair in, 235; Whitsuntide mummers in, 297; Shrovetide or Lenten ceremonies in, 307; the Old Woman at harvest in, 402; harvest customs in, 454, 457, 458, 460; Lenten fires in, 612; Easter fires in, 617; Midsummer fires in, 624; "fire of heaven" in, 644
Swallows as scapegoats, 541
Swami Bhaskaranandaji Saraswati, 100
Swan-woman, Tartar story of the, 676
Swazieland, knots as charms in, 242
Swearing on stones, 33
Sweat, contagious magic of, 43
Sweating as a purification, 207
Sweden, sacred grove in, 110; peasants stick leafy branches in cornfields in, 118; guardian trees in, 120; birch twigs on the eve of May Day in, 122; bonfires and May-poles at Midsummer in, 122; Midsummer Bride and Bridegroom in, 133; Frey and his priestess in, 143; dramatic contest between Summer and Winter on May Day in, 316; harvest customs in, 406; custom at threshing in, 431; Yule Boar in, 461; Christmas custom in, 462; Easter bonfires in, 617; May Day bonfires in, 621, 645; Midsummer fires in, 625; the need-fire in, 641; the mistletoe in, 661, 663; Balder's balefires in, 664; superstitions about a parasitic rowan in, 702; the divining rod in, 705
Swedish kings, traces of nine years' reign of, 278
"Sweethearts of St. John," 343, 344
Swine's flesh, sacramentally eaten, 470, 472; not eaten by worshippers of Attis, 471
Swineherds forbidden to enter Egyptian temples, 472
Swinging, at ploughing rite in Siam, 285, 288; to make the flax grow high, 289
Switzerland, harvest customs in, 455, 457, 458; frightening away the spirits of the wood in, 561; Lenten fires in, 613; the need-fire in, 641, 645; the mistletoe in, 661, 662; fern-seed on St. John's Night in, 705
Sword, a magical, 109
Swords used to ward off or expel demons, 549, 551
Sycamore at doors on May Day, 121; effigy of Osiris placed on boughs of, 376
Syleus, the legend of, 442
Sylvan deities in classical art, 117
Sympathy, magical, 38
Syrians, their religious attitude to pigs, 471; esteemed fish sacred, 473
Syria, 241; Adonis in, 327; precaution against caterpillars in, 531
Szis, the, of Upper Burmah, 418

Ta-ta-thi tribe of New South Wales, 76
Tâ-uz (Tammuz), 338
Tabali, chief of, 237
Taboo, or negative magic, 19-22, 29; of chiefs and kings, 204; the meaning of, 223; conceived as a dangerous physical substance which needs to be insulated, 594. *See also* Taboos
Taboo rajah and chief, 177-8
Tabooed acts, 194-202; hands, 204-8, 210, 214, 233; persons, 202-23, 593-5; things, 223-4; words, 244-62
Taboos, on food, 21, 238; on parents of twins, 66; royal and priestly, 168-75; on intercourse with strangers, 194; on eating and drinking, 198; on showing the face, 199; on quitting the house, 200; on leaving food over, 200; on chiefs and kings, 202; on mourners, 205; on women, 207; on warriors, 210; on man-slayers, 212; on hunters and fishers, 216; as spiritual insulators, 223; on iron, 224; on sharp weapons, 226; on blood, 227; relating to the head, 230; on hair, 231; on spittle, 237; on knots and rings, 238; on words, 244; on personal names, 244; on names of relations, 249; on names of the dead, 251; on names of kings and other sacred persons, 257; on names of gods, 260; regulating the lives of divine kings, 593
—— observed in fishing and hunting, 20; by children in the absence of their fathers, 21, 22, 26; by wives in the absence of their husbands, 21-5; by sisters in the absence of their brothers, 25; after house-building, 117; for the sake of the crops, 138; by the Mikado, 169; by headmen in Assam, 173; by ancient kings of Ireland, 173; by the Flamen Dialis, 174; by the Bodia, 175; by sacred milkmen among the Todas, 175; by priest of Earth in Southern Nigeria, 594
Tahiti, seclusion of women after childbirth in, 208; king and queen of, 224, 593; sanctity of the head in, 231; names of kings not to be pronounced in, 259
Talismans possessed by the Fire King of Cambodia, 108

Talmud, the, on menstruous women, 604
Talos, legend of, 280
Tamarind tree, sacred, 118
Tammuz, or Adonis, 325; the lover of Ishtar, 325; laments for, 326; mourned for at Jerusalem, 327; as a corn-spirit, 338; his bones ground in a mill, 338, 442; perhaps represented by the mock king of Sacaea, 442-3
Tana (Tanna), one of the New Hebrides, contagious magic of clothes in, 43; magic practised on refuse of food in, 201
Tapio, woodland god in Finland, 141
Tar barrel, burning, swung round pole at Midsummer, 625
Tara, capital of ancient Ireland, 173, 273
Tari Pennu, earth goddess, 434
Taro plants beaten to make them grow, 581
Tarquin the Elder, 152
—— the Proud, 150
Tartar Khan, ceremony at visiting a, 198
—— stories of the external soul, 675, 676
Tartars, the Buddhist, 102
Tasmania, 252
Tatius, king of Rome, 152, 158
Tattoo marks of priests of Attis, 352
Tattooing in the Punjaub, 180
Tauric Diana, her image brought by Orestes to Italy, 2; only to be appeased with human blood, 6
Taygetus, Mount, sacrifices to the sun on, 79
Taylor, Rev. J. C., 570
Teeth, contagious magic of, 38-39; of rats and mice in magic, 39; of ancestor in magical ceremony, 78; of sacred kings preserved as amulets, 109; loss of, supposed effect of breaking a taboo, 206; as a rain-charm, 234; extracted, kept against the resurrection, 236
Tegner, Swedish poet, 664
Tein-eigin, need-fire, in Scotland, 617, 618
Telepathy, magical, 22, 24, 25
Telugus, their way of stopping rain, 64
Temple at Jerusalem, built without iron, 225
Temples built in honour of living kings of Babylon, and of Egypt, 104
Tenedos, isle of, 291, 392
Tepehuanes of Mexico, 193
Teton Indians, 524
Teutonic kings as priests, 9; stories of the external soul, 672; thunder-god, 160
Tezcatlipoco, Mexican god, 587
Thargelia, Greek festival of the, 579, 582
Thebes, the Boeotian, grave of Dionysus at, 389
Thebes, in Egypt, 142, 174; Valley of the Kings at, 377; annual sacrifice of ram to Ammon at, 477, 500
Theddora tribe of South-east Australia, 498
Theocracies in America, 170
Theogamy, divine marriage, 140
Theology distinguished from religion, 50
Theseus and Hippolytus, 4
Thesmophoria, ancient Greek festival, 353, 371, 389, 469, 470
Thevet, F. A., 88
Thieves' candles, 30, 31, 56
Thlinkeet or Tlingit Indians, 234, 528, 600
Thompson Indians of British Columbia, 27, 45, 487, 708
Thonga, Bantu tribe of South Africa, 708
Thor, the Norse thunder-god, 160
Thorn bushes to keep off ghosts, 207
Thorns, wreaths of, hung up as a sign to warn off strangers, 558
Thoth, Egyptian god of wisdom, 362, 364
Thrace, worship of Dionysus in, 386; the Bacchanals of, 390; human scapegoat in, 579
Thracian gods ruddy and blue-eyed, 260
Thread, use of, in magic, 181, 242, 545
Thresher of the last corn, 400, 405-6, 448, 456, 458, 460
Thresher-cow, in the Canton of Zurich, 458
Threshing, customs at, 400, 405, 418, 428-9, 431, 448, 449, 451, 453, 456, 458, 460
Threshing-dog, 448
Thrumalum, mythical being in Australia, 693
Thunar or Donar, German thunder-god, 160
Thunder, imitation of, 63; kings expected to make, 149; expiation for hearing, 174; Midsummer fires a protection against, 627, 629
Thunder-beings, 524; -besom, 662, 709; -bird, the mythical, 599; -god, 161
Thunderbolt, Zeus surnamed the, 159
Thuremlin, a mythical being, 692
Thüringen, homoeopathic magic at sowing flax in, 28; May King in, 129; Whitsuntide mummers in, 298, 300; carrying out Death in, 308; customs at threshing in, 405, 458; the Harvest-cock in, 451; "the Boar in the corn" in, 460; Midsummer fires in, 656
Tiber, puppets thrown into the, 493
Tibet, the Grand Lamas of, 102; incarnate human gods in, 103; vicarious use of images in, 492; human scapegoats in, 572
Tibetan new year, 572
Tides, homoeopathic magic of the, 34, 35
Tigers, respected in Sumatra, 519
Timmes, the, of Sierra Leone, 176
Timor, island of, telepathy in, 26; fetish or taboo rajah in, 177; war customs in, 212; transference of fatigue to leaves in, 540
Timorlaut Islands, 526, 564
Tinneh or Déné Indians, 208; of North-west America, 486
Titans kill Dionysus, 388
Tiyans of Malabar, 602
Tlingit or Thlinkeet Indians, 234, 528, 600
Tlokoala, a secret society of the Nootka Indians, 699
Toads in relation to rain, 73
Tobacco, used as an emetic, 484-5
Tobacco smoke, priest inspired by, 95
Toboongkoo, the, of Central Celebes, 116
Todas, a tribe of Southern India, 100, 175, 534
Togoland, expulsion of devils in, 555
Tolalaki, the, of Central Celebes, 498
Tolampoos, the, of Central Celebes, 244
Tomori, the, of Central Celebes, 116, 416
Tonapoo, the, of Central Celebes, 117
Tonga, chief's touch thought to heal scrofula in, 90; veneration paid to divine chiefs in, 177; kings of, 203, 231; tabooed persons not allowed to handle food in, 206; ceremony performed after contact with a sacred chief in, 473

Tonquin, division of monarchy in, 177; annual expulsion of demons in, 558
Toothache, transferred to enemies, 539; remedy for, 544
Toradjas of Central Celebes, 18, 21, 68, 71, 75, 117, 197, 232, 416, 581
Torches, offered by women to Diana, 3; used to mimic lightning, 77; used in expulsion of demons, 548, 550, 554, 555, 557, 560, 562; in expulsion of witches, 560, 561; processions with lighted, 610, 611, 647; carried round folds, 631; applied to fruit trees to fertilise them, 647
Torres Straits Islands, 604; magic in the, 18; personal names tabooed in, 250; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 598
Tortoises in magic, 36; reasons for not eating, 495
Totem, skin disease supposed to be caused by eating, 473; supposed effect of killing, 689; receptacle for a man's external soul, 690; transference of soul to, 692, 700
Totem animal, artificial, 699; clans, 17, 504, 700
Totemism, in Australia and America, 533; suggested theory of, 689
Totems, magical ceremonies for the multiplication of the, 17, 85-6
Toumbuluh tribe of North Celebes, 239, 240
Toxcatl, old Mexican festival, 587
Transmigration of human souls, into turtles, 504; into bears, 511; into totem animals, 691
Transubstantiation, 490
Transylvania, rain-making in, 71; festival of Green George in, 126; continence at sowing in, 138; saying as to sleeping child in, 182; harvest customs in, 451, 452, 456; customs at sowing in, 530; story of the external soul in, 672
Transylvania, the Germans of, 239; the Roumanians of, 191, 227, 341; the Saxons of, 238, 306, 312, 316, 456, 530, 672
Travancore, the Rajah of, 543
Tree, that has been struck by lightning, 80, 708; decked with sham bracelets, etc., 342; burnt in the Midsummer bonfire, 626, 628; external soul in a, 670, 680. *See also* Trees
Tree-agates, 34
—— -spirit, represented simultaneously in vegetable and human form, 125; representative of, thrown into water to ensure rain, 126; killing of the, 296-323; resurrection of the, 300; in relation to the vegetation-spirit, 315-16; Attis as a, 352; Osiris as a, 380; effigies of, burnt in bonfires, 651; human representatives of, put to death, 652, 665
—— -spirits, 109-17; beneficent powers of, 117-20, 651; in human form or embodied in living people, 125
—— -worship, 109; among the ancient Germans, 110; among European families of the Aryan stock, 110; among the Lithuanians, 110; in ancient Greece and Italy, 111; among the Finnish-Ugrian stock in Europe, 111; notions at the root of, 111; in modern Europe, relics of, 120-35
Trees, worship of, 109; oracular, 110; regarded as animate, 111; sacrifices offered to, 112, 113, 115, 116, 118; sensitive, 112; apologies offered to, for cutting them down, 113; bleeding, 113; threatened to make them bear fruit, 113; married to each other, 114; in blossom treated like pregnant women, 115; animated by the souls of the dead, 115; planted on graves, 115; demons in, 116; ceremonies at cutting down, 116; grant women an easy delivery, 120; sacred, 120; represented on the monuments of Osiris, 380; in relation to Dionysus, 387; evils transferred to, 545; burnt in bonfires, 612, 616, 626, 630, 651; lives of people bound up with, 681, 682; passing through cleft trees as a cure for various maladies, 682-3; fire thought by savages to be stored like sap in, 706
Tribute of youths and maidens sent to the Minotaur, 280
Trinity, the Hindoo, 52
Triptolemus, prince of Eleusis, 394, 396, 470
Troezen, sanctuary of Hippolytus at, 6
Trolls, 617, 625, 663, 707
Tsetsaut Indians of British Columbia, 600
Tshi-speaking peoples of the Gold Coast, 26
Tsimshian Indians of British Columbia, 66
Tsuen-cheu-fu, in China, geomancy at, 36
Tuaregs of the Sahara, 252
Tübingen, burying the Carnival near, 306
Tuhoe tribe of Maoris, 119
Tullus Hostilius, king of Rome, 141, 158
Tumleo, island of, 43
Tuña, a spirit, expulsion of, 551
Turcoman cure for fever, 242
Turkestan, human scapegoat in, 543
Turks, exorcism practised by the, 195; preserve their nail-parings for use at the resurrection, 236; of Central Asia, 496
Turmeric cultivated, 434, 437
Turner's picture of the Golden Bough, 1
"Turquoise, Mistress of," at Sinai, 330
Turtle, magical models of, 18
Turtles, killing the sacred, 502; transmigration of human souls into, 504
Twanyirika, an Australian spirit, 693
Twelfth Day, ceremony of the King at Carcassone on, 537; the Eve of, 561, 609, 647
—— Night, expulsion of the powers of evil on, 561; the King of the Bean on, 586; the Yule log on, 637
Twelve Days from Christmas to Twelfth Night, precautions against witches during the, 561; Nights, remains of Yule log scattered over the fields during the, 637
Twins, 29, 227; taboos laid on parents of, 66; supposed to possess magical powers, 66-7; associated with salmon, and the grizzly bear, 66; called children of the sky, 67; water poured on graves of, 67; parents of, thought to be able to fertilise plantain trees, 137
"Two Brothers, The," Egyptian tale of, 674
Tycoons, the, 176
Typhon, or Set, the brother of Osiris, 363, 365, 475

Tyrol, the, witches in, 234; disposal of loose hair in, 237; wedding-ring as amulet in, 243; customs at threshing in, 429; the last thresher in, 449, 456; "burning out the witches" in, 560, 622; Lenten fires in, 612; Midsummer fires in, 625; fern-seed in, 705

Ualaroi, the, of the Darling River, 692
Uap, island of, taboos observed by fishermen in, 218
Uea, one of the Loyalty Islands, 185
Uganda, 208; priest inspired by tobacco smoke in, 95; taboos observed by father of twins in, 227; king's brothers burnt in, 286; human scapegoats in, 543, 565; king of, 543, 565, 593
Ukraine, ceremony to fertilise the fields on St. George's Day in the, 137
Uliase, East Indian island, 191, 196
Ulster, taboos observed by the ancient kings of, 173
Umbrians, ordeal of battle among the, 158
Unconquered Sun, Mithra identified with the, 358
Universal healer, mistletoe called, 659
Unmatjera tribe of Central Australia, 693
Unreason, Abbot of, 586
Upsala, sacred grove at, 110; festival at, 279; sacrifice of king's sons at, 290; human sacrifices at, 354
Upulero, the spirit of the sun, 14
Ur, the fourth dynasty of, 104
Urua, divinity claimed by the chief of, 98

Valerius Soranus, 262
Vampyres, need-fire kindled as a safeguard against, 641, 649
Vancouver Island, 599
Vedijovis, she-goat sacrificed to, 392
Vegetable and animal life associated in the primitive mind, 325
Vegetation, homoeopathic influence of persons on, 29; spirit of, 124, 125, 127-129, 131; influence of the sexes on, 135-139; men and women masquerading as the spirits of, 140; marriage of the powers of, 146; death and revival of the spirit of, 300, 315, 318-19; perhaps generalised from a tree-spirit, 315-16, 339; growth and decay of, 324, 385; decay and revival of, in the rites of Adonis, 337; gardens of Adonis charms to promote the growth of, 341, 342; Attis as a god of, 352; Osiris as a god of, 381, 385; decay and growth of, conceived as the death and resurrection of gods, 385; ancient deities of, as animals, 464-79; Mars a deity of, 578; spirit of, burnt in effigy, 651; reasons for burning a deity of, 651; leaf-clad representative of the spirit of, burnt, 652; view that victims of the Druids represented spirits of, 658
"Veins of the Nile," 371
Veleda, a deified woman, 97
Vendée, custom of threshing in, 406
Venison, ill effect of eating, 496
Venus (Aphrodite) and Adonis, 5, 7, 8
Venus, the planet, identified with Astarte, 346, 370
Vermin, from hair returned to their owner, 236; propitiated by farmers, 530; exorcised with torches, 647
Verres, Roman governor, 397
Vervain, 17, 623, 624
Vesta, temple of, 3, 704; perpetual fire of, 3, 665
Vestal fire, 3; at Nemi, 163, 164
—— Virgins, 3, 153, 235, 478, 493
Vestals, 4, 145
Victoria, Queen, worshipped in Orissa, 100
Victoria, aborigines of, 45, 252; sex totems in, 688
Victoria Nyanza, Lake, 87
Vine, the cultivation of, introduced by Osiris, 362, 380; in relation to Dionysus, 380
Vintage song, Phoenician, 425, 442
Violets sprung from the blood of Attis, 348
Virbius, 4, 5, 8, 141, 163, 164, 301, 476, 707
Virgin, the Heavenly, mother of the Sun, 358
Virgin Mary and Isis, 383
—— mothers, tales of, 347
Virgins, sacrifice of, 146, 370
Vitu Levu, Fijian island, 695
Vitzilipuztli, a great Mexican god, 488
Voigtland, locks unlocked at childbirth in, 239; bonfires on Walpurgis Night in, 622
Volga, sacred groves among the tribes of the, 111
Vomiting, homoeopathic cure for, 16; as a religious rite, 485
Vosges, the, disposal of cut hair and nails in, 236; harvest customs in, 449; Midsummer fires in, 629, 645; cats burnt alive on Shrove Tuesday in, 656
Vosges Mountains, the, May customs in, 121; "catching the cat" in, 453
Voyages, telepathy in, 24

Wadai, Sultan of, 200, 273
Wageia of East Africa, 215
Wagogo of East Africa, 23, 72, 85, 495
Wagtail, the yellow, in magic, 15, 16
Waizganthos, an old Prussian god, 288
Wajagga of East Africa, 237
Wakanda, a spirit, 216
Wakelbura of Australia, 180, 603
Wakondyo of Central Africa, 76
Walber, the, 126, 127
Waldemar I., King of Denmark, 89
Wales, belief as to death at ebb tide in, 35; harvest customs in, 403; falling sickness transferred to fowls in, 545; Beltane fires in, 620; Midsummer fires in, 630, 646; Hallowe'en fires in, 635; mistletoe in, 661, 663
Walhalla, mistletoe growing east of, 608
Wallachia, crown of last ears of corn worn by girl at harvest in, 341
Walos of Senegambia, 660
Walpurgis Day in Upper Franken, 616
—— Night, witches abroad on, 560, 622; annual expulsion of witches on, 561
Wambugwe of East Africa, 72, 84
Wandorobbo of East Africa, 219
Wanika of East Africa, 112
War, telepathy in, 25-7; rules of ceremonial purity observed in, 210; continence in, 210-12

Warlock, the invulnerable, stories of, 668
Warramunga of Central Australia, 17
Warriors tabooed, 210, 594
Warts, transferred to ash-tree, 546
Warua, the, 198
Washing, forbidden for magical reasons, 21, 23, 68; practised as a ceremonial purification by the Jews, and by the Greeks, 473
Wataturu of East Africa, 85
Watchdogs, charm to silence, 31
Water, used in charms, 26, 63, 67, 71, 341; kings of, 108; in Midsummer festival, 154, 625; of Life, Ishtar sprinkled with, 326; used to wash away sins, 543
Water-ousel, heart of, eaten to make eater wise and eloquent, 496
—— -spirits, propitiation of, 127; women married to, 145; sacrifices to, 146; danger of, 192
Wawamba of Central Africa, 76
Wax figures in magic, 543-4
Weapon and wound, contagious magic of, 41-3
Weapons, prayers to, 27; of warriors, purification of, 214; sharp, tabooed, 226
Weariness, transferred to stones, 540
Weather, magical control of the, 60-83
Weaving, charm to ensure skill in, 32
Wedding ring amulet against witchcraft, 243
Weevils spared by Esthonian peasants, 530
Wells, cleansed as rain-charm, 67; menstruous women kept from, 604, 606
Wends, the, 119, 402, 451; of Saxony, 708
Wennland in Sweden, treatment of strangers on the threshing-floor in, 431; grain of last sheaf baked in a girl-shaped loaf in, 1100
Westermarck, Dr. Edward, 642, 643
Westphalia, the Whitsuntide Bride in, 135; the last sheaf at harvest in, 401; the Harvest-cock in, 451; Easter fires in, 615; the Yule log in, 637
Wetar, East Indian island, stabbing people's shadows in, 189; belief regarding leprosy in, 473
Whale, solemn burial of dead, 223
Whale's ghost, fear of injuring, 220
Whalers, taboos observed by, 217, 220, 221
Whales, ceremonies observed at the slaughter of, 523
Wheat and barley, the cultivation of, introduced by Osiris, 363; discovered by Isis, 382
Wheat Bride, 408; -cock, 451; -cow, 457; -dog, 448, 449; -goat, 454; -man, 428; -mother, 400; -pug, 449; -sow, 460; -wolf, 449, 450
Wheel, effigy of death attached to a, 311; fire kindled by the rotation of a, 627, 639, 644; as a symbol of the sun, 644
Wheels, burning, rolled down hill, 612, 613, 615, 622-4, 626, 641, 643, 645, 646; rolled over fields at Midsummer to fertilise them, 629, 647; perhaps intended to burn witches, 649
Whit-Monday, custom observed by Russian girls on, 128; the Leaf King at Hildesheim on, 130; the king of Bohemia on, 130; the king's game on, 132; pretence of beheading a leaf-clad man on, 297; pretence of beheading the king on, 298-9
Whitsun-Bride in Denmark, 133
Whitsuntide, races at, 124, 129; contests for the kingship at, 129, 132; drama of Summer and Winter at, 317
Whitsuntide Basket, 129; Bride, 132, 133, 135; Bridegroom, 133; crown, 132, 133; customs, 121, 124, 128-35; King, 129, 132, 133, 298-9; -lout, 128; mummers, 296-301; Queen, 131, 132, 299
Wicker giants at popular festivals in Europe, 654; burnt in summer bonfires, 655
Widows and widowers, mourning customs observed by, 207
Wife, the Old, name given to the last corn cut, 403
Wife's infidelity thought to injure her absent husband, 23, 25
Wild animals, propitiated by hunters, 518-532
—— Man, a Whitsuntide mummer, 467
Willow, mistletoe growing on, 660
Willow-tree, 683; at festival of Green George among the gypsies, 126-7
Winamwanga of Northern Rhodesia, 708
Wind, the magical control of the, 80-83; of the Cross, 81; in the corn, sayings as to the, 399, 448, 454, 457, 459, 460, 463
Winds, charms to calm the, 80; sold to sailors, 81; tied up in knots, 81; kept in jars, 170
Wine, the sacramental use of, 498
Winnowing basket, image of snake in, 535
—— fan, in rain-making, 73; used to scatter ashes of human victims, 378, 443; an emblem of Dionysus, 388
Winter, ceremony at the end of, 551; general clearance of evils at the beginning or end of, 575
—— and Summer, dramatic battle of, 316-317
Witch, burnt in Ireland, 56; burnt at St. Andrews, 243; name given to last corn cut after sunset, 403; Old, burning the, 429. *See also* Witches
"Witch-shots," 649
Witchcraft, dread of, 194, 236; strangers suspected of practising, 194; practised in Scotland, 542; protections against, 610, 620, 626-8, 648, 656, 663, 666, 702, 707; need-fire, a sovereign remedy for, 641; ailments attributed to, 649; fatal to milk and butter, 663
Witches, 44; raise the wind, 80, 81; make use of cut hair, 234, 237; protections against, 243, 620, 627; expulsion of, 560; burning of, 560, 561, 621, 635, 658; shooting the, 561; effigies of, burnt in bonfires, 610, 612, 613, 648, 658; charm to protect fields against, 615; cast spells on cattle, 620; steal milk from cows, 620, 627, 628, 648; abroad on Walpurgis Night, 622; driving away, 622; resort to the Blocksberg, 625; steal milk and butter, 628; abroad at Hallowe'en, 634; cause hail and thunderstorms, 649; burning missiles

thrown at, 649; brought down from the clouds by shots and smoke, 649-50; thought to keep their strength in their hair, 680-81; tortured in India, 681; animal familiars of, 684
Witchetty grubs, 17
Wives, taboos observed by, 21-5
Wizards, 43; Finnish, 81; capture human souls, 187, 188; thought to keep their strength in their hair, 680-81; animal familiars of, 683, 684
Wolf, track of, in contagious magic, 44; corn-spirit as, 448; last sheaf at harvest called, 449, 450; beast-god of Lycopolis in Egypt, 500; ceremonies at killing a, 520, 521; the Green, 628, 652, 664
Wolf society among the Nootka Indians, rite of initiation into, 699
Women, taboos observed by, 20, 25, 26; dances of, 26-8, 64; employed to sow fields on the principle of homoeopathic magic, 28; plough as a rain-charm, 70; worshipped by ancient Germans, 97; married to gods, 142-5; tabooed at menstruation and childbirth, 207-10, 603; not allowed to mention husbands' names, 249; influence of corn-spirit on, 410; thought to have no soul, 497; ceremonies performed by, to rid fields of vermin, 531; put to death in the character of goddesses in Mexico, 589; impregnated by the sun, 603; dread of menstruous, 603
——, barren, charms to procure offspring, 14; sterilising influence ascribed to, 29, 137; thought to conceive through eating nuts of a palm-tree, 119; fertilised by trees, 119, 120; thought to blight the fruits of the earth, 137; fertilised by being struck with a certain stick, 581
——, pregnant, forbidden to spin or twist ropes, 21; not to loiter in the doorways where there are, 22; employed to fertilise crops and fruit-trees, 28
Wonghi tribe of New South Wales, 692
Wood, King of the, at Nemi, 1, 3, 8, 106, 140, 147, 163, 164, 167, 269, 296, 300, 301, 586, 593, 703, 710
Wood-spirits in goat form, 465
Woodmen, ceremonies observed by, at felling trees, 112, 113
Words, tabooed, 244-62; savages take a materialistic view of, 247
World, as regarded by early man, 91
Wotjobaluk tribe in Victoria, 43, 687
Wotyaks, the, of Russia, 143, 559
Wound and weapon, contagious magic of, 41-3
Wrach (Hag), name given to last corn cut in Wales, 403, 404
Wren, hunting the, 536-7
Wünsch, R., 344
Würtemberg, bushes set up on Palm Sunday in, 125; the thresher of the last corn at Tettnang in, 456; effigy of goat at Ellwangen in, 456; leaf-clad mummer at Midsummer in, 653
Wurunjeri tribe of Victoria, 183

Xerxes in Thessaly, 290
Xnumayo tribe of Zulus, 257

Yabim tribe of New Guinea, 213, 597, 694
Yakut shamans and their external souls, 683
Yakuts, 80
Yams, feast of, 200; ceremony at eating the new, 483
Yap, one of the Caroline Islands, 598
Yarilo, the, funeral of, celebrated in Russia, 318
Year, the fixed Alexandrian, 373; the Caffre, 483; the Egyptian, a vague year, 368; the old Roman, 577; the Slavonic, 577
Years, cycle of eight, in ancient Greece, 279; the King of the, in Tibet, 573, 574
Yellow colour in magic, 15
Yezo or Yesso, Japanese island, the Ainos of, 505, 507
Ynglingar family, 155
Yorkshire, "burning the Old Witch" in, 429; clergyman cuts the first corn in, 481
Yorubas of West Africa, 230, 256, 273, 570
Youths and maidens, tribute of, sent to Minos, 280
Yuin tribe of New South Wales, 191
Yuki Indians of California, 27
Yukon River, the Lower, the Esquimaux of, 193
Yule Boar, 461-2, 478; log, 636-8, 641, 643, 646
Yuracares of Eastern Bolivia, 601

Zafimanelo, the, of Madagascar, 198
Zagmuk, Babylonian festival, 281
Zagreus, a form of Dionysus, 388
Zaparo Indians of Ecuador, 495
Zapotecs of Central America, 687; the pontiff of the, 170, 593, 595
Zara-mama, Maize Mother, 413
Zemis of Assam, 248
Zeus, rain made by, 71; the priest of, makes rain by an oak branch, 77; mimicked by King Salmoneus, 77; marriage with Demeter at Eleusis, 142; and Hera, 143, 159; and Dione, 151, 165; as god of the oak, the rain, and the thunder, 159; his oracular oak at Dodona, 159; prayed to for rain, 159; Greek kings called, 159; surnamed Thunderbolt, 159; his resemblance to Donar, Thor, Perun, and Perkunas, 160-61; the grave of, 265; his oracular cave on Mount Ida, 280; his intrigue with Persephone, 388; said to have transferred the sceptre to young Dionysus, 388; father of Dionysus by Demeter, 389; his appearance to Hercules in the shape of a ram, 500; and Danae, 602
Zeus, the Descender, places struck by lightning consecrated to, 159; Heavenly, at Sparta, 9; Lacedaemon, at Sparta, 9; Laphystian, 290-92; Lightning, sacrificial hearth of, 159; Polieus in Cos, 466
Zimbas, or Muzimbas, of South-east Africa, 97
Zoganes, temporary king at Babylon, put to death after a reign of five days, 282

Zoilus, priest of Dionysus at Orchomenus, 291
Zulu language, its diversity, 258
Zululand, rain-making by means of a "heaven-bird" in, 75; children buried to the neck as a rain-charm in, 75; names of chiefs and kings tabooed in, 257; kings put to death in, 272; festival of first-fruits in, 483; seclusion of girls at puberty in, 595; gardens fumigated with medicated smoke in, 645
Zulus, 192, 495, 498
Zuni Indians of New Mexico, 502, 504, 571
Żytniamatka, the Corn-mother, 421

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